### SPIRITUAL WORKS

OF THE

Rev. John Gother.

### IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES.



Vol. XII.

NEWCASTLE:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY F. COATES; MESS. KEATING, COGHLAN, AND BOOKER, IN LONDON; Wo-GAN, AND CROSS, DUBLIN. 8.11.9017 Contention Corgiving input Furming

#### A

### PRACTICAL CATECHISM,

DIVIDED INTO FIFTY-TWO LESSONS FOR EACH SUNDAY IN THE YEAR:

WITH

AN APPENDIX,
FOR PARTICULAR STATES AND CONDITIONS.

## CONTENTS

F the Christian's rule Of natural inclination and that bliow Of cloaths 11. Of eating and drinking Of furniture 80 Cleon row months and the conversion of the Of correspondent of the season to Of an idle life Of vifits Of company !-Of the government of our w the best of the property of the total of the To last the thous to Of keeping pressies Of means guarrela Of loving our neighborn seek a last as charmy and peace with him Of forgiving injuries, and belong recomciled after quarkels

er ... "

West Tills

# (3) detraction, or ipeaking hit of our male birder at T CONTENTS.

| Of natural inclination and the          | ge 3 |
|---|------|
| world we to have hely month of the      | -    |
| Of cloaths                              | 5    |
| Of eating and drinking                  | 14.  |
| Of furniture                            | 18   |
| Of conversation                         | 21:  |
| Of recreation or divertisements         | 26   |
| Of an idle life                         | 30   |
| Of vifits                               | 38   |
| Of company                              | 42   |
| Of the government of our will           | 49   |
| Of peevishness or fretfulness           | 55   |
| Of anger and passion                    | 61   |
| Of keeping peace: Of contentions and    | - Q  |
| quarrels                                | 70.  |
| Of loving our neighbour, and living in  | 110  |
| charity and peace with him              | 75   |
| Of forgiving injuries, and being recon- | 1.79 |
| ciled after quarrels                    | 81.  |

Vol. XII.

### CONTENTS.

| Of humility: Of vanity and pride vol s   | 90      |
|--|---------|
| Of pride transfer transfer               | 97      |
| Of detraction, or speaking ill of our    | 19130   |
| neighbour from Sill. The anibuses to     | 103     |
| Of hearing detraction, or backbiting     | 109     |
| Of lying 10 to the control               | 116     |
|  | 123     |
| Of due endeavours for overcoming the     | ilina - |
| habit of fwearing and curfing. And       |         |
| of taking God's name in vain             |         |
| Of rash judgment, suspicion, or jealousy | 137     |
| Of temptations                           | 144     |
| Of temptations and to whole out          | 150     |
| Of folicitude in temporal concerns       | 158     |
| Of a worldly spirit                      | 164     |
| Of tepidity or lukewarmness              | 172     |
| Of prayer                                | 179     |
| Of distraction and dryness in time of    |         |
| prayer                                   | 186     |
| Of repentance                            | 192     |
| Of the endeavours of true repentance     | do K    |
| for the amendment of life                | 198     |
| Of fcruples and immoderate fears         | 205     |
| Of fadness or melancholy                 | 211     |
| Of the Holy Communion                    | 219     |
| Of patience                              | 225     |
| Of troubles and afflictions              | 232     |
| Of the best method in time of trouble    | 238     |
| Of docility, or being eafy in taking ad- |         |
|  | 245     |
| Of the love of worldly things            | 251     |

### CONTENTS.

| Of the love of created things O   | 257     |
|---|---------|
| ~!!! [전통] 전환경기 (1912년 12 전환경) 보기되었다. 수 있는 (1912년 12 전환경 1912년 ) 전환경기 (1914년 1914년 1914년 1914년 1914년 1914년 1914년 | 263     |
| Of felf-denial ili gnicked no mailtenad   | 260     |
| Of not regarding what the world fays  | 275     |
| Of scandal or offence taken at what we  | OF ID   |
| afay or do  | 281     |
| We are not to approve the fcandalous actions of others  | 287     |
| Of entire confidence in God   | 294     |
|   | 300     |
| Of avoiding all superstition  | 307     |
| Of observing days   | 314     |
| All to the glory of God   | 322     |
|   | 7 7 7 7 |

### APPENDIX.

5

|  | THE PARTY OF |
|--|--------------|
| Of chusing a state of life               | 330          |
| Of virgins                               | 335          |
| Of married persons                       | 340          |
| Of parents                               | 345          |
| Of children to parents                   |              |
| Of children to parents                   | 350          |
| Of widows                                | 355          |
| Of masters and mistresses and masters    | 360          |
| Of masters and mistresses with regard    | Oftac        |
| to fervants day as was a second of while | 364          |
| Of fervants                              | 370          |
| tofii A*worldly things est               | of the       |
|  | -            |

### CONTENTS

| Of fervants Of labourers, shopkeepers, and all tr | 9374 |
|---|------|
| ders  | 270  |
| Obligations of justice in other profe             | 0.30 |
| fions, offices, employments                       | 383  |
| Of Subjects to for soil                           | 389  |
| Of the rich                                       | 394  |
| M SIXTEEN VOLTOOR and 10                          |      |
| Of the fick                                       | 404  |
| Of fuch as cannot read, or have no                |      |
| time to pray                                      | 410  |
| Of the finner                                     | 416  |
| Of the pastors of Christ's church                 | 410  |



PRINTED FOR AND TOUD BY E. CORIES MEM. HEAT GO.

Le kifeed capp out kip.

### To the READER.

9

14

9

4

9

THERE the practice of the Gospel is the subject, nothing new can be expected: To look for this here, would be to forget the undertaking; since novelty, which, in other cases, is so inviting, in this is a scandal. I propose nothing beyond the import of the title, which is to shew the practice of the Gospel: There are already great numbers of admirable books upon this subject; and yet I hope the method of this will make it both welcome and profitable. Question and Answer is the method which renders all matters plain and easy, fitting them for all capacities; and since the faith of the Gospel is thus generally taught throughout the world, I cannot tell why its morals should not be so too; and why there should not be practical catechisms, as well as speculative. This is what I propose, and accordingly I have distributed the whole matter into fifty-two lessons, that one being read or expounded every Sunday, the whole duty of a Christian may be examined and considered every year, and no opportunity be given for vice or injustice, to thrive under the favour of ig-VOL. XII.

norance. To these are added some other lessons, relating to the particular states and conditions of Christians, which may be taken in as circumstances shall require. And if in either part shall be found repetitions of what is in other books, I hope the reader will suspend all censure, till he find that general docility in Christians, as to make repetitions needless, when they have once been put in mind of their duty.

De sie Gesteral zur 10

This aget discount and such a to

vienistot an e salv

of that belongs to name after a

A World Committee of the committee of

A The rate white research and page

the first of the formulation of the second o

broad set to be found to surrow boat I am

Charlians on the charles of the contract of th

this is what upey undertake. By this this are all thinguished from all others and it

This is the very thing dev protein.

With the Contract of the Contr

John Cash off The

### PRACTICAL CATECHISM.

### CHAP. I.

### Of the Christian's Rule.

2. WHAT is the rule which every Christian ought to follow, in all that belongs to human life?

A. The rule which every Christian ought to follow, is the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

2 Why is this his rule?

A Because the Christian can hope for no salvation, but through Jesus Christ; and therefore the doctrine of Jesus Christ must be their rule, who hope to be saved by him?

Q. Where is this doctrine to be found?

A. The doctrine of Christ is to be found in the Gospel.

Q. Then all Christians ought to follow

the Gospel?

alda od od bas

A. This is the very thing they profess; this is what they undertake. By this they are distinguished from all others: And if

Aij

they do not follow it, they are false to their profession.

Q. How is the Christian to make the Gospel his rule? Is it enough to read it?

A. No; it is not enough to read it.

2. Is it enough to remember it, and to be ready in citing chapter and verse?

A. No; this is not enough.

- 2. Is it enough to understand it, to be well versed in the comments, and to be able to dispute upon all the difficulties of it?
  - A. No; this is not enough.

    Q. Why is not this enough?
- A. Because a person may be very learned in all this, and yet not live as the Gospel directs.

Q. What then is he to do, to make the

Gospel his rule?

- A. He is to observe all the directions given in the Gospel, and follow them in his life.
- Q. In what particulars is he to follow them?
- A. In all that belongs to the government of the inward and outward man.

2. As how?

A He is to bring all the desires, motions, and affections of his heart, to be examined by the Gospel: He is to examine his words, actions, proposals, conversation, with the whole method of his life, by the same test;

and as this approves or disapproves, so accordingly is he to proceed; never doing what the Gospel condemns, nor omitting what it enjoins. And this is, in all things, to live by the spirit of the Gospel.



### olds of or bu C H A P. II.

Of Natural Inclination, and the World.

AY a person who has the Gospel for his rule, follow his own natural inclinations?

A. No; he must not.

2 Why fo?

A. Because our natural inclinations are generally corrupt, and lead us contrary to the spirit of the Gospel.

2 What then must the follower of the

Gospel do?

A. He must, with a watchful eye, obferve all his inclinations: And such as are finful, he must with all diligence resist.

2. And as for fuch as feem to be inno-

cent?

V

ıt

d

s,

ne

A. These must be well examined, because they are often very deceitful; so that seeming innocence many times leads to the

A iii

greatest crimes. There is a way that feemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death, Prov xvi. 25.

2. And as to the world, what must the

Christian do?

A. He must be very cautious how he follows the world.

2. Why fo?

A. Because this is corrupt in almost all its ways; it promotes what the Gospel disapproves, and brings all that into disesteem, which the Gospel recommends: So that whoever follows it, will unavoidably be led out of the way of the Gospel.

2. Then the good Christian must not live

nor admire the world?

A. No; The friendship of the world is enmity with God: Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, James iv. 4.

2. Does not the authority of the world

feem very great?

- A. It is certainly very great with worldly fouls, who are always willing to think well of that which favours their inclination.
- Q. And is not its authority great with others?
- A. This cannot be; for they certainly undervalue it, and have it in great contempt.

Q. Why fo?

A. Because the world sets up against the ways and will of God: And while all respect is due to him alone, must not that be contemptible which stands against him?

2 What then must the Christian do, as

to all the ways of the world?

A. He must measure them by the Gospel; and as far as he finds them contrary to what is there prescribed, he is obliged to depart from them, whatever be the authority of number or custom that pleads for them.

Q. Is not this the way to be fingular?

A. It is the way to do like few; and this can be no reproach, fince you know who fays, there are but few chosen.

Q. Must not they who do thus, in resisting their own inclinations and the world, live under the exercise of great self-denials?

A. This cannot be helped, where nature and the world are so corrupt. And therefore self-denial is the necessary condition of Christ's disciple. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me, Luke ix. 23.

Then the Gospel is to be followed,

whatever the difficulties be?

A. I know no remedy. The Gospel is such as Christ has given us; and he being

the best guide to salvation, we must either go his way, or not at all.

Q. Upon the whole then, what must the

Christian do?

A. He must take all his measures of what is lawful and unlawful, just or unjust, right or wrong, safe or dangerous, edifying or scandalous, good or evil, spiritual or carnal, from the principles and rules delivered by Jesus Christ in the Gospel, and accordingly he must govern his whole life.

Q If this be the way, will you now descend to particulars, and running through all the circumstances of human life, tell me how

the Gospel directs?

A. You have been often instructed in these lessons; now, let me hear what you remember?

A. This is a difficult task, but at your command I will do my best.



### CHAP. III.

### Of Cloaths.

2. WHAT directions does the Gospel give in this point?

A. It expressly advises all to be content with such cloaths as necessity requires for

covering us: Having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content, 1 Tim., vi. 8.

adly, It commends St John Baptist, for not being cloathed in soft garments, in costly apparel, and delicacies, Luke vii. 25. But for having his garment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, Matt. iii. 4.

Q. Does the Gospel any where discou-

rage us from the use of rich apparel?

A. It feems so to do in the case of the rich glutton; where having shewn his unhappy sate, of being cast into hell, and the occasion of this his unhappiness; it is particularly observed, that he was cloathed with purple and sitk, or fine linen, Luke xvi. 19.

2 Is there any thing in this point parti-

cularly directed to women?

A. Yes, the two great apostles, St Peter and St Paul, speak to them in particular; advising them to set forth themselves with the most winning ornaments, and telling them what these ornaments are.

2. As how?

A. St Peter giving direction, how a believing wife may gain an unbelieving hufband, fays thus: Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: But let it be the hidden man of the

heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, subject to their own busbands, I Pet. iii. 3.

Q. What does St Paul fay on this fub-

ject ?

A. The very same; but only that he expresses himself more positively by way of precept, and addresses it to all women: I will—that women adorn themselves in modesst apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety: Not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array: But (which becometh women professing piety) with good works, I Tim. ii. 8, 9.

Q. What is the substance of these words

of the apostles?

A. That women ought not to feek the outward ornaments of riches and art; but the inward ornaments of a fober, modelt, meek, and quiet mind, abounding in good works.

Q. Is not this very hard advice?

A. All the rules of the Gospel are hard to corrupt nature, and to a worldly spirit; and the more corruption is strengthened, the more averse it is to what the

Gospel directs. But the question is, Whether it be not the best advice?

2. How is it the best advice?

A. Because it directs them to make use of such ornaments as are, of all, the most valuable; and such alone as are capable of raising them highest in the esteem of all who know what really deserves esteem.

2. How is this?

A. It is thus: That there is nothing of real worth from outward ornaments, fince under these there may be all that is vile and contemptible; and these may be set on the beast as well as the man. But, as for the inward ornaments of the mind, they have a real value in them; such as makes the possessor truly honourable before God and man.

forbidden to the Christians?

A. Vanity, and all manner of excess, is certainly reproved. Hence it must be owned,

First, That such outward ornaments are forbidden as immodesty contrives, and advises as most effectual for drawing others into a snare.

are forbidden, as are folicited by a vain, worldly, ambitious, or envious spirit.

A vi

3dly, That such outward ornaments are forbidden, as in their immoderate expence, are an injury to their family, or other obligations of their condition.

In these, and other like cases, it cannot be questioned but outward ornaments are forbidden, as being the suggestions of sin.

2. But what is to be faid in other cases?

A. In other cases let it be considered; First, That the body is the prison of the foul; and whether that foul feems not to forget itself, which is eager in magnifying its chains. 2dly, That cloaths are the argument and confequences of fin; and whether it be reasonable to seek satisfaction in that which ought to be our confusion. 3dly, That the general motives for more than necessary expence in cloaths, are felf-love, or compliance with the world: And whether it can be commendable in a Christian to hearken to these, when he is required to Deny bimself, Luke ix. 25. And Not to be conformed to this world, Rom. xii. 2. Lastly, That alms being so helpful to salvation, and to be given of that which is superfluous; whether it can be christian wisdom to put fuperfluities on the back, which might be turned to fo much better an account. Let these points be duly considered, and some judgment may be made of all fondness of outward ornaments, even where no finful passion pleads for them.

2. What is now to be concluded from

this chapter?

A. It must be concluded as evident, from the plain words of scripture; First, That plain and cheap cloathing is most agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel; even that, which comes nearest to what necessity demands, in covering from shame and cold.

2d/y, That expensive ornaments are often very finful, and seldom fail of being the effect of some weakness; and therefore are more conformable to the spirit of the world,

than of Jesus Christ.

Lastly, That with this condemnation of pride and folly, must not be confounded what prudence may require in some particular occasions, and what circumstances of condition may demand, without a fault; neither is pride to take advantage of what is here allowed to prudence: If it does, I defire to be no party, but enter my protestation, and declare against it.

to sister auto follo and a 182

#### CHAP. IV.

by Esting and Experience

### Of Eating and Drinking.

HAT directions does the Gospel give upon this subject?

A. First, it condemns all revelling, riot-

ing, and drunkenness.

Q. Where are these condemned?

A. Luke xxi. 34. " Take heed to yourfelves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with furfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Then, Rom. xiii, 12, Let us cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light: Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonnels; not in strife and envying, but put ye on our Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof. Again, Gal. v. 19. The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, --- drunkenness, revellings, and fuch like; of which I foretell you, as I told you before, that they, who do fuch things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Laftly, 1 Cor vi. 9, Know ye not, that the unrighteous hall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, — nor drunkards, nor revilers, — shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Q. This is plain and positive enough as to this point: What farther directions does

the Gospel give?

1

r-

S.

e

2,

k

di

n-

ut.

ot

lts ks

e;

rs,

ch

of

ot,

the

A. It commends and advises great moderation in eating and drinking: As in St Paul, above cited: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these let us be content, 1 Tim. vi. 8. Again, in setting temperance amongst the fruits of the Holy Ghost, Gal. v. 23. And teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Tit. ii. 12.

Q. What farther does it advise us upon

this subject?

A. It gives us many hints, that fasting is a profitable exercise, serving for many good

purposes of a christian life.

First, As one practice of virtue: "Anna departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayer night and day, Luke ii. 37. Let us approve ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, — in labours, in watchings, in fasting, 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5.

2dly, As a proper means for overcoming the devil; "This kind (of devil) goeth not

out, but by prayer and fasting," Matt. xvii.

3dly, As moving God to particular mercies: "As they ministered and fasted, the Holy Ghost said; separate me Saul and Barnabas unto the work, whereto I have called

them", Acts xiii. 2.

lar grace and protection; "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away, Acts xiii. 3. And when they had ordained them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to our Lord", Acts. xiv. 22.

Q. What now is the sum of this chapter?

A. ist. That excess in eating and drinking, as gluttony and drunkenness, are absolutely and severely forbidden by the Gospel.

adly, That moderation in eating and drinking, such as comes nearest to satisfying the necessities of nature, is most agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel.

3dly, I hat fasting is commended by the

Goipel, as a most christian exercise.

Q. If this be the truth of the Gospel, what must be said of those Christians, who frequently commit excess in drinking?

A. Has not St Paul faid, "that drunk-

ards shall not inherit the kingdom of God".

And what need then of any farther answer

to this point?

e

d

ls

ts

t-

p-

k-

0-

el.

ng

ole

he

el,

ho

ik-

Q. What must be said of those who study to please their appetite in all its demands; and for this end, have their tables surnished with all that is rare and costly; and never think themselves more happy, than at such entertainments?

A. I find nothing of this approved in the Gospel; it is not taught by Jesus Christ, and therefore can be no part of a disciple.

2. But is it forbidden?

A. It is according to the spirit of the Gospel, and that is direction enough for those who are serious in the profession they have made, of following Christ.

2. And must not those, then, that are serious Christians, make any entertainments?

A. This is no where forbidden: And, in many cases, it may be commended; as when it is, for the support of neighbourhood, friendship, or charity. But then this ought ever to be with these conditions of moderation and sobriety. For when the expence is extravagant and vain, and intemperance is encouraged or tolerated, then such entertainments are sinful.

Q. What then is to be faid of those, who invite guests and take pains to make them

drunk? And, as for their fervants, think it

an affront if they go away fober?

A. I can tell what to fear of these; that they are given over to a reprobate sense: But what to say to them, I cannot tell; except, that they would learn to believe in God; for this they seem to have yet to learn.

2. What guests make the most christian

entertainment?

A. The poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; so Christ has declared, "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," Luke xiv. 13.

#### 

#### CHAP. V.

### Of Furniture.

2. DOES the Gospel give any directions as to this point?

A. Those, who are willing, will find enough in the Gospel for their direction.

First, St Paul gives this advice; " Letyour moderation be known unto all men: The Lord is at hand, Phil. iv. 5. And in this, requiring all things to be done with moderation, excepts against all that is extravagant.

adly, Vanity, pride, and ambition, being forbid in the Gospel, all that must be forbidden, which grows from these stocks; and consequently, that furniture cannot be approved, which in the providing, has thefe for counfel. The same alon distribution.

it

at

::

Xin

to

in

he

en

n-

be

2; T-

1

ns

nd

31/2, It being a rule in the Gospel, "To feek first the kingdom of God; and that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. iv. 11. The Christian may easily offend against this rule, when he is at great expence in fuch things, as have no relation to the kingdom of God, and in

which God is not glorified.

4thly, God having manifested his will, that he will call an account of their stewardship, and of the talents entrusted with them; there may be a great offence in profituting money to the service of curiosity, vanity, or humour, which might have been employed in the comfort of the poor, relief of the diftreffed, and other ways of glorifying God, and doing good to our neighbour.

5thly, It being declared the duty of all

Christians, to live and walk by the Spirt of Gbrist; and it being evident, that pomp, ambition, and prodigality, belong not to the Spirit of Christ, but to that of the world, it must be confessed, that in many purchases, a Christian may depart from the Spirit of Christ, and be led by another, which is at enmity with him.

2. I hope conveniencies will be allowed?

A. To provide necessaries is the first care; and then conveniencies: Nay, where there is sufficient, so much cost may be allowed, as to make home pleasing; but then it must be pleasing to reason, and not to all, that a boundless curiosity or ambition can demand. For there is so much of prodigality in these, that in extravagance and waste, they can compare with the worst of vices; and yet it is often with so much colour of reason, that they seem to ask nothing, but what has some great convenience or use to plead for it.

Q. What then do you advise?

A. I advise all that have money to study well themselves, and not to take all that for reasonable, which presents itself under this cover. It is very easy to be partial, where they judge of their own inclinations; and great prodigality may be justified with the title of decency and want. Wherefore all these have reason to examine their desires.

that so they may not spend unprofitably, what, with better management, might be their soul's everlasting comfort. A review of their accounts would soon inform them, whether this advice belongs to them or no.

of

p,

to

d,

arit at

? b

e;

is as

ast a d.

ſe,

an

it

nat

me

dy

for

his

ere

ind

the

all

res,

### C H A P. IV.

### Of Conversation.

2. WHAT is the Christian to observe in point of conversation?

A. He is to give proof of what he is, in all occurrences of human life, and particularly in conversation.

2. Where is this enjoined?

Lie Mandal of Sylvish a

A. The will of God is declared by St Peter: "As he, who has called you, is holy; so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, You shall be holy, because I am holy, 1 Pet. i. 15. Again, You are a chosen generation, a royal priest-hood, a holy nation, a purchased people; that you may shew forth his virtues, who from darkness hath called you into his marvellous light: Which sometimes were not a people, but are now the people of God;

which had not obtained mercy, but now having obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I befeech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from carnal desires, which war against the soul," 1 Pet. ii. 9.

2. What is particularly commanded in

this?

A. That Christians be holy in all manner of conversation: And this for several motives: First, because they belong to God, whose holiness ought to be the model of adly, Because they are his peculiar theirs. 3dly, Because they partake of choice. Christ's priesthood, and ought to become victims fanctified to God. 4thly, Because they are the price of Christ's blood. Lastly, because, by the particular effect of God's love, they are called from darkness to advance toward the light of eternal glory. Upon these motives of gratitude and love, Christians ought to be ever on their gaurd, fo as, even in conversation, to give proof of that holiness, which, upon so many titles, belongs to their profession.

2 In what manner is this to be practi-

fed?

A. First, so as not to speak or do any thing, which may be the occasion of offence or scandal to such as are present.

Q. Where is this forbidden?

WC

, I

ab-

nst

in

ner

no-

od.

of

liar

me

ause

alt-

od's

ad-

ory.

ove,

urd,

f of

tles,

acti-

any

ence

A. In many places of the New Testament: " He that shall scandalize one of these little ones, that believe in me, it were better for him, that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and be drowned in the depth of the fea. Woe to the world because of scandals; for it must needs be, that fcandals come; but nevertheless, Woe to that man by whom the scandal comes, Matt. xviii. 6. We beseech you, that you receive not the grace of God in vain - giving no offence to any man, 2 Cor. vi 1, 3. Whether ye eat or drink, or do any other thing, do all things unto the glory of God. Be without offence to the Jews and to the Gentiles, and to the church of God, 1 Cor. x. 31. Take heed, left perhaps this your liberty become an offence to the weak. For finning thus against the brethren, and striking their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Wherefore if meat scandalize my brother, I will not eat flesh, while the world standeth, lest I scandalize my brother, 1 Cor. viii. 9. Abstain from all appearance of evil," 1 Theff. v. 22.

2. And is this care to be general, so as

to give scandal to none?

A. St Paul has so declared, as now cited. "Be without offence to the Jews, and to the Gentiles, and to the church of God, and

to the weak brethren:" Here all are included. But St Peter doubles the caution in respect to unbelievers: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you, as evil-doers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation, Pet. ii. 12. Having a good conscience; that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed, that salsely accuse your good conversation in Christ," 1 Pet. iii. 16.

2. In what other manner is the holiness

of conversation to be practifed?

A. Not only in avoiding what may give offence, but likewise in being careful to do all to edification

Q. Where is this enjoined?

A. In many places of the New Testament. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven, Matt. v. 16. Let us follow the things that are of peace, and the things wherewith one may edify another, Rom. xiv. 19. Let every one of you please his neighbour unto good, to his edification, Rom. xv. 2. Let all things be done to edification," 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

2. If this be a duty enjoined, what is to be thought of those who in their conversa-

tion

u-

in

n-

at

0-

ch

of

od

of

ed,

ion

ress

do

ent. that

rify

16.

ace,

e of

his

s be

is to

erfa-

tion

fation generally give offence to their neighbour, either in words or actions: By swearing and other profanations; by making a jest of what is finful; by immodest words or gestures; by invitations to evil in any kind, or by extravagant passions?

A. Christ our Redeemer has spoken plain enough of these, in the wees pronounced against such, as give scandal to any, that believe in him; and declaring it better for them, that, with a mill-stone about their neck, they were thrown into the sea.

Q. In what confifts the evil they do?

A. In being the instruments or ministers of the devil, and setting up for his interest, for the damnation of those souls for whom Christ has shed his blood. This is the extremity of all evils. Besides this, their general practice lays a scandal upon truth, renders many averse to it, and makes the enemies of God and his truth to blaspheme. Thus are they many ways the hinderance of salvation to all such as follow their ill example, or are by them drawn into sin, or take occasion from them to blaspheme the ways of God.

2. Where has God shewed his displeasure against those who hinder others, or by their ill example, put them out of the way of salvation?

Vol. XII.

A. A lively figure of this may be in the people of Amalek, who lying in wait for the children of Israel; and stopping them in their way to the Land of Promise, so provoked the anger of God, that he commanded them to be utterly destroyed, without sparing man or woman, infant or suckling, ox or sheep, I Sam. xv. 2. How much severer then must their judgments be, who lay snares for their neighbour, and put him out of his way to heaven!

### mammamm

### C H A P. VII.

Of Recreation, or Divertisements.

2. WHAT rule may be fafely observed in these?

A. The Gospel, which trains up disciples of the cross, gives no rule for divertisements. But, however, some are permitted, though not prescribed there.

Q. How far then is permitted?

A. As far as is necessary for health, and for the relief of the body and mind. These cannot be always employed, and therefore

fo much relaxation is to be allowed, as may prepare them for new labour.

2. Are there any conditions to be obser-

ved in this matter?

n

)-

b

a-

X

er

res

his

C

erved

ciples

nents.

nough

a, and

Thefe

erefore

A. Some are already hinted: That divertisements be used with moderation, and be directed to a good end, as for health, or a neceffary recruit of the spirits. There are two other conditions to be added, viz. That they be not finful, nor prejudicial to the foul or body. The heathens had no restraint in following what pleased them, and therefore had their divertisements mixed with all manner of excesses, with all that was dissolute and brutish, being "given up, as St Paul fays, to a reprobate mind," Rom. i. 28. Christians are not to do thus; nor even divert theinselves with what is dangerous; for t cannot be reasonable to make that their pastime, in which is hazarded either the prelent life or eternity. Who ever played upon precipices but madmen?

Q. What recreations are to come under

this head?

A. All that have any thing disorderly in them, whether in keeping ill hours, or in ill company, or hazarding too much: And all uch as are accompanied with great temptations, as in balls, plays, and many other public meetings, where the liberties and

Bij

other circumstances are such, as if all had been bespoken for the devil's service.

Q. Are any others to be reckoned under

this head?

A. All those, though otherwise innocent, in which persons spend so much time, as to neglect their business, or any obligations of their state, or of their soul. And likewise those which persons follow, contrary to their command, under whose care they are.

Q. Are there still any others?

A. All those, in which persons use some fraud, to their neighbours loss; or being expert at any game, draw in others who are unexperienced to venture more than is sitting, and thus take advantage of their rashness, to their considerable prejudice; for this is nothing better than cheating, and very far from that Gospel-rule of doing as they would have others do to them.

#### § II.

### Of Immoderate Divertisements.

2. IF there be so many ways of offending in ordinary divertisements, what is to be said of those who make divertisement the great business of their life, and do little

else, besides changing from one pastime to another?

A. If we suppose the divertisements to be most innocent in themselves; yet such a life cannot be innocent.

2. Why fo? Where is the offence?

A. First, In not obeying the precept of Christ, who commands all to watch; and repeats this so often, that its necessity for salvation cannot be questioned. Now it is evident, the Christians you mention, do not watch (as is prescribed) whose life is a perpetual dissipation, and who are so far from being watchful in the concern of eternity, that their thoughts are scarce to be esteemed serious in any thing.

adly. In not denving themselves, as Christ has enjoined his followers. For how do they satisfy this precept, who have only one solicitude, and that is, how to please them-

felves?

3dly, In daily improving in themselves a worldly spirit; in wilfully exposing themselves to endless temptations and dangers; in flattering their own corruption; in prodigally wasting what should be laid up for a treasure in heaven; in not striving to enter at the narrow gate; in not redeeming their time, nor seeking before all things the kingdom of God, nor working out their salva-Biii

ending at is to ement o little

had

nder

cent,

as to

as of

wife

their

fome

g ex.

o are

is fit.

rash.

and

ng as

tion with fear and trembling, nor labourin' by good works to make their election fure.

Infinite of these crimes there are in this kind of life, which yet is bold enough to put in its claim to innocence.

2. Are those who follow it so much mis-

taken?

A. So they are like to find it; and for the truth of this, I refer them to the Gospel. For whoever reads this, will find so many difficulties and duties in a Christian life; so much corruption in nature and the world; so much subtilty and industry in the enemy of their souls; so great labour and watching necessary for gaining the victory, which belongs to a Christian state; that he must conclude all those who seek nothing, but to amuse themselves with change of idleness, have little of a Christian, besides the name; and that their whole life is a trangression of the most substantial rules of the Gospel.



### CHAP. VIII.

Of an Idle Life.

2. WHAT judgment is to be framed of an idle life, according to the principles of the Gospel?

A. If we judge it by the Gospel, we must conclude it to be out of the way of salvation.

Q. Where is this judgment passed?

A. In several places: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire, Matt. vii. 19. Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: Cut it down, therefore; why has it place in the ground? Luke xiii. 7 The unprositable fervant, cast ye out into utter darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xxv. 30.

2. How are these words the condemna-

tion of an idle life?

in

e. .

this

to

nif-

for

pel.

any

fo

ld;

my

ing

be-

on-

to

ess,

e;

自角

ned

the

A. Because the persons generally subject to an idle life, are such as enjoy many blef-sings of heaven, and have many talents entrusted in their hands; and these being so far from making an advantage of them, to the glory of God, or their own salvation, that they either lay them up unprofitably, or prodigally abuse them, to the offence of the Giver, in making them a sacrifice to appetite and self-love; it is but too plain, that these are the trees without fruit, and the unprofitable servants, against which sentence is so positively pronounced.

2. But if these are careful in avoiding all

that is finful? Biv

- A. How can this be pretended, when Not bringing forth fruit of the bleffings they have received, is crime enough, by the rule of the Gospel, to be cast forth into utter darkness?
  - Q. This is no more than omission.
- A. And is not the omission of a duty enough to make an ill Christian? Observe but the sentence of the reprobate, as expressly set down by Christ himself, (Matt. xxv 41) and you will see their condemnation laid to no other sins, but those of omission: "I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink," &c. If then these Christians omit those duties which God demands of them, they cannot be truly said to avoid what is sinful; but they live in a state of sin. But, however, their sins are not of omission only; for there are several others that sollow in upon this.

2. As how?

A. Idleness leads to many fins. They who are subject to it, are uneasy at all that is serious, they have a loathing of all good entertainment: Hence seeking to divert themselves, this must be with unprofitable company, either at home or abroad. Such conversation feeds the passions, magnifies the world, raises the value of all that is vain and earthly, softens the soul, accustoms it

to many disorders, gives it a familiarity with many undue liberties, puts it frequently in the occasion of sin. And now let those speak who know the difficulty of being virtuous in the midst of temptations, whether these who are so much weakened, and yet so generally in danger, must not unavoidably sall under a manifold guilt; especially since there is so little reason to presume of a Divine help, where there is so very little care to seek it.

Q. Can you believe these to be so much deceived? Many of them are of so good principles, that could they imagine this of themselves, they would soon change their method.

it

e

at

od

rt

le

ch

es

in

it

A. They unqualify themselves for being judges in the case. Conversing so much as they do with what is evil, makes them lose the horror of sin; so that, if they keep out of the very depth of scandal, they seem to have no reason for scruple. Being fond of the world, they judge by principles favourable to the world; and by these they are taught to undervalue whatever advice would bring them nearer to the Gospel, as not belonging to those who live in the world. Being seldom serious in considering the obligations of a disciple, or the things belonging to eternity, they are not capable

of making a right judgment of them: Upon these reasons they are not sensible of their own unhappy state, and even then are posting on in the way of eternal misery, when they see nothing sufficient to question the innocence of their lives.

Q if this be a just judgment of persons who live an idle life, what would you ad-

vise them to do?

A. I would advise them to employ themfelves.

2. As how?

A. There is no state of life but has some employment annexed to it, even by the order of justice. Persons of estate ought to look after their estate, see how it is managed, whether capable of improvement, take and examine accounts, &c. For want of this inspection, they are often great losers, and do wrong to their generation. Persons who have family or children under their care, have in this business enough. Every day brings its work with it: And though they have many good servants; yet if all be left to deputies, there must be variety of miscarriages, while they prefume all goes well. Those then of this state, who think they have nothing to do, either trust too much to others, or have not yet begun to think what their obligation is; and this is not

to want employment, but to be wanting to it.

Q. But what of young persons, whose good circumstances excuse them from la-

bour?

A. These have enough to do, to prepare and fit themselves for the state of life in which they are to be engaged. There are variety of qualifications for every state, and these ought to be learnt before-hand. An idle person can be fit for no state, and therefore one thing which all are to learn, is not to be idle.

Q. How is this to be learned?

A. A good temper learns it with ease; and good parents make it easy to all tempers, by practice, and the exact observance of good discipline.

Q. But if youth, for want of good discipline, have a dislike of all employments?

A. They must supply the want of better education by their own reason, joined with the advice of friends.

2 As how?

f-1.

h

ık

ot

A. They are first to convince themselves of the mischief of idleness, and then resolve to begin a new method, and break off all ill customs. They are to rise something earlier in the morning, and by degrees defeat that ill custom of sleeping away the best part of

B vj

the day. They are to have a fet time, both morning and afternoon, for praying and reading in some book of instruction; this is an exercise very necessary for them, for possessing their minds with the true ideas of all things belonging to this world and the next; for teaching them to value what is really valuable, and to despise what is really contemptible. They are likewise to task themselves, both morning and afternoon, with something that may be business to them; chusing, at first, what is most agreeable, and beginning with moderation, so to come on by degrees to what may be of more advantage to them.

They are not to renounce all recreation; for such violent heats are to be suspected as not likely to last; but however, they ought to break off those divertisements, and that company, which have engaged them most in idleness; for these being the very things which have fed their distemper, all indulgence here must be a contradiction to their present design; and to keep on with these, while they resolve upon amendment, is to roll in the mire, and resolve not to be dirty. These, then, must be changed; and though for others less agreeable, yet it being for their good, this is more for their purpose, and the reasonable part ought to take place.

2. Is not the difficulty of what you pre-

fcribe likely to hinder the practice?

A. Medicines are seldom agreeable; but if a distemper requires them, they must be submitted to, as being not so bad as the disease. Idleness is the highway to hell, and it is worth any one's labour to get out of it. If then there be some difficulty in what I propose; yet since I speak not to brutes, but to persons of sense, of reason, and of faith, I may expect to be heard, since it is for their eternal good, who are to go through this cure. If they are sensible of their unhappiness, they will approve of the remedy.

Q. What now is the fum of this chap-

ter?

nt at

ft

gs

ıleir

ſe,

to

ty.

igh

for

ofe,

ice.

A. 1. That an idle, unprofitable life, exposes the Christian to many temptations and

dangers.

2. Brings him under the guilt of many fins, in the neglect of the greatest duties, in making his life a facrifice to felf-love, in wasting his time, in wasting his money, &c. and all this, while he falfely believes himfelf innocent.

3. I hat it is not a Christian life, but contrary to the great design of the Gospel; and therefore is punished with eternal death.

4. That all in this unhappy way are bound to begin a new method. That per-

fons of all conditions have some employments annexed to their state; that, if they have no necessity of working for bread, yet salvation makes some employment necessary for them. That idleness in youth is the beginning of a vicious life. That to teach them to love employment, is more valuable than to make them great fortunes. That idleness soon consumes a great estate; but an industrious temper sinds happiness in a moderate one.

### CHAP. IX.

# Of Visits.

2. Is it allowed to make visits?

A. This is not to be made a question.

Business sometimes requires it, sometimes civility, sometimes charity. And where these are the motives, it is not only allowable to make and receive visits, but likewise good to do it. Nay, many times it becomes an obligation, where the omission is likely to give offence; and if there be self-denial in it, it is still the better action.

2. But if persons are fond of giving and

receiving vifits?

A. There may be a great fault in this. For this may be the effect of idleness, when persons not knowing how to employ their time, contrive by this way to help it off their hands. It may be the effect of vanity. when persons having a good opinion of themselves, are fond of this method, so to increase the number of their admirers. It may be the effect again of pride, because they think there is fomething in this that looks great. It may be the effect of a gossiping temper, which thus feeds itself. and has the fairest opportunity of knowing all that passes. Now if any of these, or other like corruption, lies at the root, the fondness of visits must certainly be evil; and the Gospel can no more allow of them, than of idleness, vanity, and pride, which are the promoters of them.

Q. But as for persons who have no reafon to suspect themselves in any of these particulars, need they be under any re-

ftraint?

d

A. These are very powerful in some breast, where they are not suspected; and a complication of all these ingredients makes up that worldly spirit, which is almost inseparable from a fondness of these interviews. Wherever therefore the affections are with eagerness bent this way, there cannot fail of

this corruption being at the bottom, though it may lie undifcerned, to those especially

who are not willing to fee it.

2. But may we not hope there are some, amongst those whose circumstances oblige them to visit, who are not under the influence of these evils: And what of these?

A. These, in the first place, ought so to manage or lessen their visits, that they become not the business of their life, and devour not all that time which should be

better employed.

all that corruption which is ever ready to take the advantage of circumstances so favourable to it; and even then renounce the spirit of the world, when outwardly they join with it: Following the advice of the apostle, in so using the world, as if they used it not.

n

g

tl

to

p

m

mac

and often very finful, in a flattering compliance with the most unreasonable and unjust pussions of others, or in rashly and uncharitably commenting upon the absent: Since here are unadvisedly spoken such words as often lay the grounds of great dissensions, and other considerable inconveniences; since here piety is often ridiculed, and every profane or atheistical humour takes the freedom which ought to be the abhorrence of every Christian ear; since here is applauded and admired every thing that the world admires, without any regard to what the Gospel teaches: Good Christians ought not to go to fuch meetings, but as persons do to infected places, with great apprehension of the danger, and providing against it in the best manner they can; and therefore, before they go, ought to beg, in prayer, the particular protection of the Divine grace, for the government of their fenses, of all their eyes, their ears, their tongue; that they may not offend in any kind, either by lightness, rashness, passion, or indiscretion; and that they may not join in any discourse that can be prejudicial to the Gospel, to God, their neighbour, or their own fouls, in any degree.

Lastly, At their return home, they ought, on their knees, humbly to beg pardon for whatever guilt they may have contracted through want of due care, and befeech God to prevent all ill effects of their oversights, passion, or indiscretion: As likewise, by his grace, to prevent the mischiefs of whatever they have heard or seen, that their hearts may not admire what is vain, nor give admittance to any maxims which are not

according to the Gospel.

i-

ft

a-

ce

as

as,

ro-

2. Have you any farther direction on

this subject?

A. That good Christians, in all their vifits, would observe how much pains and money it costs most people in the service of vanity and the world, and hence be ashamed that they themselves take so much less care in the service of God. That they lament daily to fee how the profesfors of the Gospel strive to out-do one another in going farthest from it, and place their great fatisfaction in things disapproved by it. And that they remember how much more to their purpose it is, to visit the widow, the poor, the comfortless, the prisoner, and the fick, than to go to those schools of vanity, which can scarce be an advantage to any, but to those who have the art of drawing good out of evil.

## CHAP. X.

Of Company.

AVING spoken of visits, what rules have you as to the choice of company?

A. Some ought to be observed: As, first,

ti

to

not to be hasty in the choice; especially, where there is likely to be any freedom of conversation or friendship: Because the looks and mien are often great cheats, and the inward disposition of mind is not always answerable to what appears without.

adly, To make choice of company by reason, and not by the eye, inclination, or passion. One may like those best, which may be very prejudicial to him. Affection is blind, therefore reason is to be the eye, and discretion the council.

y

n

at

t.

re

ne

he

у,

ıy,

ng

ules

om-

first,

3dly, Due examination having been made, fufficient to know persons: Such as are fond of a sinful life, are not to be chosen; because these are enemies to God, and of ill example, and therefore to be avoided.

athly, Those who are of a worldly spirit, and an undisciplined life, are not to be chosen; because conversation and friendship with such, will bring Christians by degrees to approve their ways, and to despise the advice of such friends, whose charity cannot but grieve at the dangerous circumstances into which they have brought themselves.

5thly, Those are not to be chosen, whose principles may be suspected, and whose virtue is not sufficiently known; because freedom with such may be very dangerous. And to depend on them may be the way to ruin.

6thly, Those who are passionate, indiscreet, and have not a command of their tongue, are not to be chosen; because friendship or freedom with such, will soon

be followed with vexatious troubles.

7thly, Those then alone ought to be made choice of, who are of good principles, exemplary, and virtuous; whose conversation may be edifying, whose experience may be instructive, and whose prudence may be ferviceable in any friendly part. So that while a Christian ought to be civil to all, and never shew any dislike or uneafiness when he meets with those who are disagreeable to him; yet for familiars and friends, he ought to chuse only such who have these good qualities to recommend them.

2. But if persons find no fatisfaction in

fuch company?

A. They are in the greater want of it. To find no relish in what is good and wholefome, is an argument of some indisposition; and as such must not eat poison, because they have no taste of wholesome meat; so neither ought Christians to chuse always by what they like best, but to choose that which is best, and bring themselves by degrees to a liking of it.

2. Is it not unseasonable to prescribe self.

denial on fuch a subject as this?

A. It may look so; but it is certainly no where more seasonable, since the omission of it is the readiest way to ruin.

2. How fo?

se'

fo

yc

ch

a

lf-

A. You may fee it in scripture; where God commanded his people not to make choice of the inhabitants of the land to which they were going, lest it should become as a snare in the midst of them, and by this means they should be persuaded to for-sake their God, Exod. xxxiv. 12. It is prescribed likewise by St Paul; "Now, I have written to you, not to keep company, if any man, that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat," I Cor. v. 11.

The reason of this injunction is but too plain, since ill company is like a plague; there is no conversing with them, without danger of being insected. It is by this way all manner of wickedness spreads, and the kingdom of the devil is enlarged. Let but any one reslect upon those, who living in wickedness, have renounced the precepts of the Gospel, and they will find that ill company has been the great occasion of their unhappiness. So that a little experience in the world is enough to satisfy any considerer, that self-denial is as necessary in

the choice of company, as in any other case whatever.

2. Is this to be a general rule for all?

A. There are none but what may have occasion for following it; since inclination is feldom fo very discreet, as not to stand in need of reason to correct its choice. Do but observe, and you will soon find many persons, otherwise discreet enough, and yet in this very much overfeen, by making choice of fuch persons for their daily conversation and confidence, who are most improper for them; fuch as are too often of an ill reputation, or of fo ill principles as cannot fail of being prejudicial to them; and therefore look as if they had been picked out by an enemy's hand, and maliciously recommended to them, with no other defign than of their ruin. Reflect but on your acquaintance, and fee how many you know of both fexes, of all degrees and conditions, who in this point are bringing mischief on their own heads, and offend both against the rules of prudence and the Gospel, for want of denying their inclination, and letting this be their guide instead of reason.

2. Then it being so generally useful for all, you recommend it in particular to none?

A. Yes, while necessary for all, it is with earnestness to be pressed to youth, who, for

want of experience, are not fenfible how much both their temporal and eternal welfare depends on those whom they chuse for companions. A mistake or ill choice of these, upon their first stepping forth into the world, is many times never to be recovered, to the disappointment of the best care that has been taken in their education: And of this, there are none, I fear, who, amongst their acquaintance, are not furnished with melancholy instances of their own knowledge. Here then parents are to be watchful, as far as it is in their power; and youth may be affured their greatest interest of soul and body depends upon being well advised? But if, by felf-conceit or stubbornness, they abuse the liberty they have, and will not be directed, they will foon find the punishment of their rashness, in their misfortunes; and then too late fee their folly, when the difficulty of retreating will confirm them in mifery.

2. If this be true, I cannot but approve

your pressing it to youth.

e

th

A. The truth of it is evident in all the disorderly ways of youth. And there needs no more for making a judgment of this age, and even of telling their fortune, than to see what company they keep, and whom they make their confidents. For in this

they first shew what their discretion is; for if they choose those who can be no advantage to them, it is plain their wisdom is not great. Then they betray their inclinations; for if nothing pleases them but vain, idle, expensive, and disorderly company; if none but drinkers or gamesters; if none but light, soppish, and unsettled brains; if none but those who run from one divertisement to another; if none but gossipping and busy people; if none but newsmongers, profane, or atheistical wits; so accordingly they make a discovery of themselves, and give demonstration of what they are like to be.

2. What then is your advice to youth

upon this subject?

A. My advice is plain enough; that they would be very careful in the choice of their company, especially of those with whom they engage in any degree of familiarity or friendship. That it is as much as their souls are worth to chuse such as are good. That they follow not inclination, nor be deceived by flattery, but take time to know persons well, before they confide in them. That, for preventing all great miscarriages, both in this and other affairs, they would have some one person of piety and prudence with whom to advise on all occasions; so as to undertake

ev

tai

ou

take or resolve on no business of concern, but with his approbation. And since the choice of daily conversation is one business of this nature, to have his opinion in it. The order of Providence has given this office of direction to parents; and if youth made them their counsel, the parents would have the comfort, and they the blessing of it. But if there should be any just grounds for excepting against the advice of parents, then application ought to be made to some other discreet person; so to prevent those great miscarriages, which are the fate of too many, who make themselves miserable by not being advised.

ly

ld

to

th

eir om

or

hat ved

ons hat,

h in

ome

hom der-

take

#### CHAP. XI.

# Of the Government of our Will.

Q OUR will being corrupt and naturally inclined to evil, how is it to be governed?

A. By the will of God; for this being every way right, just, and holy, it is a certain rule; and if we follow it, we cannot go out of the way. Since then our own wills

Vol. XII.

are crooked, we must bend them, till they become comformable to the will of God, and then we cannot fail of doing well.

2. Where is this prescribed?

A. In the Lord's Prayer, where Christ has taught us to say; "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven". In which words we ask, that we may do the will of God, and not our own. And in St Matt. c. vii. v. 21, "Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father, who is in heaven".

2. Is the will of God then to be con-

fidered in all things?

A. Yes, in all. And a Christian has no other way, but only this, of satisfying the duties of his profession, and of coming at length to that kingdom, whose possession is no otherwise to be gained, but by doing the will of God.

C

e

b

to

in

to

The rule then is plain, which the Christian is obliged to follow: He is not to confult his own will, nor consider what he loves or hates, what he approves or disapproves, what is pleasing or displeasing to him: He is not to regard custom, or company, or the world, or any convenience or interest of this life, so as to take these for a sufficient warrant for acting in any thing; but what

ever is moved by these, must be proved and examined by the will of God, and so tar only to be approved and undertaken, as it is found conformable to this holy and unering rule. This is prescribed by St Paul in a sew words: "Be not conformed to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your mind; that ye may prove, what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God," Rom. xii. 2. This is the rule of all true holiness and solid virtue; and whoever takes any other way, has not God for his guide.

2. What is the best method for coming

to the observance of this rule?

0

n-

no

n is

the

rifti-

con-

oves

oves,. : He

y, or est of

what.

A. Prayer and practice. Nothing can be done, but by the affiltance of God's grace, which is to help us in our weakness: This grace therefore must be asked in prayer, with fervour, and perseverance; and because God requires us to labour and co-operate with it, therefore we must use our daily endeavours, for subduing our will, and bringing it to due obedience.

Q. What are these endeavours to be?

A. They are such as may be serviceable to the end proposed, of making the will easy in bending and complying: And this being to be effected by practice: The will must be accustomed to bend.

First, By being checked, as often as it is inclined to what is finful and expressly con-

trary to the will of God.

adly, By having its most eager desires examined, and either wholly denied or moderated, as often as it is bent upon what is disorderly, dangerous, or to be suspected of ill consequence.

3dly, By being often contradicted in things indifferent; and especially in such as

are better omitted than done.

4thly, By being put upon many things,

th

a.

go

to

th

ma

the

in

wa

ter

ing

a cof t

be,

will

qua

to which it is naturally averse.

5thly, By doing nothing upon humour, but still endeavouring to thwart this, as of-

ten as it appears.

othly, By being easy and filent, when reproved by superiors, or contradicted or reproached by equals or inferiors. And in such occasions suppressing all swelling or other motions, which may be ready to break forth and cause disturbance.

7thly, By laying by all disputes in defence of private opinion, or of any thing indisferent; and yielding the cause with sweetness

and moderation.

8thly, By being docile, tractable, and easy in all indifferent things, so as to do and follow what another directs, and to comply with any proposals, where no harm can be suspected.

ness, positiveness, and stubbornness, and by violence forcing the will to bend.

By such a practice the will may be brought under government, so as to be not only at the command, but even at the beck of reason, and in the way of a general obedience to God, which is the disposition of a good Christian, and that which all are bound to desire and seek.

n

18

S,

ir,

of-

re-

re-

in

or

eak

nce

ferness

and and

ply

1 be

2. And is the want of this practice the reason why so many have no command of their own wills?

A. The point is clear; for the will, like a wild beast not used to be governed, is ungovernable; and the more it is accustomed to go without reins, the greater difficulty there must be in bringing it under command. Hence those persons, who study their own inclinations, and are ever eager in fatisfying their defires, are not in the way of the Gospel; and it must be no matter of surprise if their lives are not according to what they profess. They, who follow a corrupt guide, must expect to be led out of the way; and what then must their fate be, who confult nothing beyond their own will and inclination, which have no one quality in them, that can fit them for guides,

C iij

being blind, corrupt, deceitful, and feeking nothing, but to please themselves, though it be with the ruin of those who are most in-

dulging to them.

A. I am for governing that which ought to be governed. I am for having that in subjection, which cannot command but with their destruction, who put the power into its hands. If it could be otherwise, I should not plead for self-denial; but since our natural corruption makes it necessary, it is much better for us to obey the command of Christ, in doing the will of God, for the purchase of heaven, than exclude ourselves from it, for the poor satisfaction of doing our own.

Q. Do you then give them over for loft,

who deny not their own wills?

A. They are not in the way of Christ, who says, Except a man deny himself, he cannot be his disciple. They are in the way of corruption and sin, for such is the way of self-will. They are in the way of those who have forsaken God, and are forsaken by him. For thus God describes his own judgments upon the Israelites; "I gave them up to the desires of their own hearts; and they walked in their own counsels", Ps. lxxx. or lxxxi. If this was the

fign of a reprobate people, and a most rigorous judgment upon them; it must be feared, that all they, who live in the daily indulgence of their own desires, and are solicitous to gratify nature and sense in their general demands, are under the displeasure of God, and are really most miserable, while they think themselves happy.

## 

### C H A P. XII.

field v. artinout of the man

# .Of Peevishness or Fretfulness.

2. Is it according to the Gospel to be peevish and fretful?

A. No, it is not.

t

n

old

a-

is of

he

ng

oft,

ift,

he

the

the

r of

are

ibes

66 1

own

oun-

the

2. How so? Where is the fault?

A. In this; That the Gospel enjoins patience to its followers, under all difficulties: It requires a peaceable submission under all the appointments of God: It demands a meek and humble spirit under all provocations and trials. Now peevishness observes none of these rules, but is wanting both in patience, in submission, in humility, and in meekness; and therefore is not according to the Gospel.

Civ

2. Are there any other faults in it?

A. Yes; there is a general injustice in it; for when persons are thus disturbed, they very often find fault where there is none; they chide those who deserve it not; and thus being uneafy themselves, cause an uneafiness in all about them; so that even those, who are faithful and industrious in their station, have no comfort of whatever they do, but are discouraged, while they do well. And how far this works with some tempers, it is not eafy to imagine, while lofing all inward peace, they are in this difabled from performing any one duty well, which belongs to their foul, and waste their fpirits in unprofitable amusements, which should be employed in better uses.

2. And have not fretful persons a share

C

fi

d

fe

h

fe

it

tl

C

in this themselves?

A. Yes; and this is another fault; for being easily disquieted, every little accident causes a disturbance in them; so that they are no more sit to pray as they ought, than if they were in the midst of a mob. And what a prejudice must this be to their own souls, whose communication with God depends so much upon an inward peace!

2. Then you do not think this temper

very edifying?

A. No, it is not edifying; it looks ill wherever it be; but it has a particular deformity in superiors and teachers, and lessens them in the opinion of those who are to be directed by them. It has the same disagreeableness in persons pretending to piety, by betraying a great oversight and much weakness in them.

2. If these be the faults of fretsulness,

what can you prescribe for its remedy?

A. I would advise those that are subject to it, to take some pains in confidering and examining the nature of the distemper. By this they will foon find it to be a great weakness of mind, which is disturbed with every inconfiderable triffe that thwarts them. this weakness being occasioned by a want of courage, a want of constancy, and of that firmness of mind which is the great commendation of a rational foul, there is in this fomething fo poor and mean, that, to a perfon of any spirit, there is enough to oblige him to use all endeavours for delivering himself from the blemish of it. A generous foul would fcorn to carry fuch a reproach about with it; a reproach, which publishes itself upon all occasions, and is so obvious, that there is no body fo dull and ignorant, but who will point at it, and to the next comers, make his remarks upon it. A re-

n

d

n

er.

proach, which discovers an ungoverned mind, and betrays the weakness of sickness in time of health. This is but an impersect character of this infirmity; but certainly, for those, who have any value for their good name, it must be motive enough to labour against that which otherwise cannot fail of being a blot amidst whatever other good qualities there may be, that may deserve commendation.

Q. What else can you prescribe?

A. I would have them consider farther, that the spirit of the Gospel is meekness and humility: That among the fruits of the Spirit, are reckoned by St Paul, gentleness and meekness; and that it being the apostle's direction, that, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit," Gal. v. 25. It ought to be the daily endeavour of all those who profess the Gospel, and know what the life of the Spirit is, not to permit in themselves a custom so disagreeable to it.

ample of Jesus Christ, whose whole life breathes nothing more remarkable than meekness and humility. I would have them hear his voice, who calls upon all his followers, "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart," Matt. xi. 29, and promites a blessing to the meek: "Blessed are

the meek; for they shall inherit the land,"
Matt. v. 5. Now where can be the sincerity of a disciple, if there be not a folicitude to follow, where the master so expressly calls?

ther the difficulty of amendment in this point be not chiefly from an ill custom; and whether such a custom be warrant enough to excuse from doing what Christ and his Gospel require. Whether such a custom may not be overcome, where there is sincerity and resolution in the undertakers. Whether they can be either good children or good servants, who will not take the pains for doing what their father and master requires of them.

Lastly, I would have them call in heaven to their affistance by prayer: Every good gift comes from God; this is one. Therefore they ought to be earnest in asking it. Their first thoughts in the morning ought to ascend to heaven with this petition; "O God, give me patience; grant that I may be truly humble and meek." The same ought to be repeated as often as in the day they bend their knees in prayer: As likewise at other times, even in the midstof all business, such slights of a heart raised to God, would be a seasonable interruption: With the

wit

t.

rfe

in

m

vnd

0-

re

C M

such importunity of prayer cannot fail of a good effect. But then this ought to be attended with a great watchfulness of mind, when occasions offer, and there seems danger of falling into this weakness. Then a guard ought to be set upon the lips, and good endeavours used for keeping the mind composed. Then fear ought to keep solicitude awake, and the soul be encouraged to be steady and faithful in what it has proposed; as likewise threatened, if it be false to its engagements, upon such inconsiderable provocations.

Perseverance in these particulars, with a due considence in God, must have a good effect, either in remedying the evil, or lessen-

A A MANAGE PARTIES.

A STATE OF STREET

the bay throw a first was

TOM REPRESENTED THE PARTY OF

ing the guilt of it.



## CHAP. XIII.

# Of Anger and Passion.

2. Is anger at any time lawful?

A. Anger may be expressed against any thing that is sinful, or dishonourable to God. But even then it must be kept within bounds, so as not to grow into a passion; for otherwise, it may easily become sinful, while it is raised against sin.

Q. In other cases, is anger an offence?

A. It is generally finful in other cases; because it is a passion not subject to reason, but blinding this light which God has given us, and by violence and usurpation, undertaking to govern us.

Q. Is anger or passion a great sin?

A. Passion may easily be a great sin; as may be seen in the ill essects of it: 1. In the disturbance it causes in those who are moved with passion, making them unsit for all duties. 2. In the disturbance caused in those against whom the anger is raised; putting them under the like indisposition.

3. In the breaking of peace, which is so

valuable a good. 4. In the scandal it gives, both in the breach of peace, and in the disedifying expressions into which it generally breaks forth. 5. In the rash judgments, and unjust charges or accusations, to which passion is subject. 6. In the great dejections and discouragements it causes in others, to the loss of all comfort, both as to body and foul. 7. In the animosities it occasions, and in often laying the seed of differences never more to be reconciled. Lastly, It being contrary to that charity and love, which are the indispensible conditions of a Christian life.

Q What remedies can you prescribe to those who are subject to it? What would

you have them do? Man Vis and and it is

endeavour to keep a strict silence, so as never to speak when they perceive them-felves in a passion.

2 How may this be effected?

A. Either by leaving the company, and going out of the occasion, which in some circumstances is the best expedient; or, by strength of reason, obliging the tongue to selence.

. Q. What is the best reason in this case?

A. Is it not reason enough, that passion is always blind, and seeing nothing aright,

cannot speak to the purpose: That it is unjust, and therefore cannot speak without doing wrong: That it is unreasonable, and therefore cannot be trusted in what it speaks: That it is rash, and therefore is likely to say some foolish or indiscreet thing, which may do harm, and must afterwards be the subject of repentance? This has so much experience to confirm it, that, if reason be not wholly stifled, it must shew itself in not allowing passion the liberty of the tongue; but still maintain this post, even when it is almost beaten out of all the rest.

This rule ought to be observed, even when passion seems to have demonstration and justice on its side; because it is very often deceived; and because it injures a good cause by its immoderate heat, bitterness, and excess; so that, whether it be in the right or in the wrong, it is most adviseable for passion to be silent, and never to command the tongue. They, who can gain this point, will find the advantage of it, in avoiding many inconveniences, into which an ungoverned tongue would foon bring them; and upon the abatement of their heats, will rejoice and bless God for the restraint they put upon themselves, in keeping filence.

e.

to

is

This discipline ought to be observed like-

wife as to the pen, so as never to take it in hand, when passion has disordered the heart. Writing letters under such disorder, occasions great inconveniences, and has surnish-

ed matter for a long repentance.

The same ought to be observed as to all outward actions, so as never to do any thing in a passion; that is, not to reprove, nor chide, nor strike, nor send messages, &c. because passion does nothing well. It is one of St Teresa's maxims; Never reprove any one in anger. And the philosopher knew how little passion was to be trusted, who said to his servant; Now would I beat thee, were I not angry. A total cessation then there ought to be, while the mind is disturbed with passion.

And this so far, as even interiorly not to resolve upon any thing in a passion, though there appears never so much evidence or justice to press the case; because no resolution ought to be taken, but upon good advice. Now this cannot be in time of anger, because the mind is not then sedate, nor calm enough for deliberation; and reason is then eclipsed, so that what at that time appears as reason, is not reason, but passion. And this ought not to be chosen for counsel, but only by those who are willing to be put upon extravagancies, and set.

out of their way. In time of anger then conclude nothing, take no resolutions; but let all business be adjourned till a better season.

Q. Well, if a person can gain this point, so as not to say, nor do, nor write, nor resolve upon any thing, when he is in a

passion, has he in this done all?

A. In this he has overcome the scandalous and indiscreet part of anger; but still it may lie in the breast, and work to such a a degree of injustice and disorder, as to be a great sin in the sight of God, while it is concealed from the eyes of men. There must be endeavours then for overcoming this part too.

Q. What motives can you produce for a Christian to take pains in overcoming it?

A. Is it not motive enough, that Christ and his holy Gospel declare the guilt of it, and in this shew that it ought not to be found in his followers? Hear what they say: "Every one who is angry with his brother, shall be guilty of judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: But whosoever shall say, Thou sool, shall be in danger of hell-fire, Matt. v. 22. The anger of man works not the righteousness of God, James i. 20. Let all bitterness, and wrath,

it

ıt

n

1-

et.

Is not this enough to make a Christian fensible of the fault and guilt of this passion, and to oblige him to give no quarter to an enemy, which will bring ruin to those that

favour it?

2. But have you any other motives for

standing against it?

A. Yes, many: 1. Anger is occasioned through a want of patience, a want of humility and submission to the will of God. Now these are so very considerable, and even necessary in a Christian life, that no body that has faith ought to sit down under the want of them.

by often leading men into great indifcretions; often into injustice; often raising confusion, and disturbing the peace of samilies and friends; often degrading men into the rage of beafts; that nobody can confider it, without raifing an aversion against it, as the dishonour and infamy of a rational creature.

- only in rendering men unfit for all duties and business, but likewise in discouraging friends from giving their advice, and hints of any false step, oversight, or indiscretion; who will scarce venture there to speak, where a word ill placed or timed, may likely provoke a storm; that a man must look upon this passion as the worst of enemies, which not only robs him of his reason, but likewise of his friends, by making them useless to him, in a point where they are capable of doing him the best service.
  - Q. If passion be thus pernicious, both as to this world and the next; what must a Christian do, that perceives it coming upon him?
  - A. He must oppose the first thoughts of it, and give a check to the disturbance of mind, as soon as it appears. He must suppress whatever disorder he finds within, and not discover it either in words or looks: If the dissiculty increases, he must quit the occasion, and seeking the first convenience of a retirement, there on his knees bow down, and humble himself under the will

of God, and pray that by his power he will lay the storm. Here he may consider the great patience and longanimity of God, in bearing the provocations of sinners, and particularly of his own sins. And if he takes some good book into his hand, and reads a chapter, it may be a means of hastening on the calm.

2. But if persons try, and with all their endeavours, cannot overcome themselves,

what must they do?

- A. They must still continue their endeavours, and never lay down their arms, as long as the enemy keeps the field. If they have hitherto laboured, and without effect; before they despair, let them examine, whether they have been in earnest; whether folicitous and watchful, as in a bufiness of concern; whether they have laboured, as in an affair ofeternity? Great works are not to be done with bare purposing, nor with ordinary endeavours. And they must not conclude they have done all they can, when they have not employed the half part of their care, and would do twice as much, were it a business of money, as it is of their fouls.
- 2. Then you suspect persons of not being fincere?
- A. I do fo, and have reason for it; and do not question, but when the case comes to

be tried, it will be found that the despair of these persons is the despair of laziness; which being unwilling to labour, chuses rather to conclude a work impossible, than take pains to essect it. They have used some endeavours, and being to no purpose, think this sufficient excuse for lying under the evil: whereas they can no more do this, than compound or make a league with the devil, because after their weak desence, he still continues carrying on his attack against them.

Let these but observe, how they can govern their tongues, when any one is near, whose presence awes them, or from whom it is their interest to conceal their passion; and hence they may see what they can do, when they have a mind to it. And then what must be the inference, but that they might do as much for their soul's sake, as for humour or interest, if they were but as much in earnest? And where is the sincerity then of their usual plea, That they would amend if they could? This is no more than a cover for sloth, and a pretext that will never pass with Him who is the searcher of hearts.

#### 266666666666666666

#### CHAP. XIV.

Of keeping Peace; of Contentions and Quarrels.

Q. OUGHT Christians to be careful in keeping peace with one another?

A. It is most certain they ought.

2. What reasons are there for it?

A. First, because the Gospel has set such a value upon peace, as to promise a blessing to such as contribute to it? "Blessed are the peace makers; for they shall be called the children of God," Matt. v. 9.

2. It was the bleffing Christ gave his apostles, upon his first seeing them after his resurrection: Pax vobis: "Peace be unto you," Luke xxiv. 36. As he had prayed for it before his passion, "That they all may be one," John xvii. 21.

3. It is one of the fruits of the Holy Ghost; "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering,

gentleness, meekness," Gal. v. 22.

4. It is the means for obtaining God's particular protection, and abiding always with us: "Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you," 2 Cor xiii. 11.

5. It is necessary for coming to the pos-

n

fession of God: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14.

6. Because God declares himself the God of peace: "God is not the God of diffen-

fion, but of peace," 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

7. Because "Variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, herefies, envyings," are numbered, by St Paul, among the works of the slesh; of which he pronounces this sentence of terror: "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 20, 21.

8. Because the same apostle sets such a mark upon contention and quarrelling: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed, that ye be not consumed one of another," Gal. v. 15.

For these and other like reasons, Christians are bound to keep peace with all men, and avoid all contentions as much as is possible; there being no hopes of seeing the face of God, but by observing this rule of the Gospel.

Q. Do you not think it difficult to keep

peace with some tempers?

th

of-

A. I do; but since peace is so valuable, and the command of keeping it is so strict, the difficulty cannot be sufficient excuse for not keeping peace. Let the Christian hear David: Cum his, qui oderunt pacem, eram pacificus: "I was peaceable with those who

hated peace, " Pf. cxixo 7. And by this he will find, that whatever the difficulty be, yet fill it may be done main drand ton at ...

Q. What means or helps can you pre-

fcribe for keeping peace? It is and ground

A. Let a Christian be but as the Gospel directs, patient, humble, and meek; and there needs no more for keeping peace. Whence you may guess at those who keep it not, that they have not yet learnt the Gospel. inument languages of the

2. But what is to be the practice of these virtues in particular, for keeping

peace Recoal to a time though anied al ,or.

A. It must be under these two heads; First, In not giving provocation to others. Secondly, in bearing patiently fuch as are given by others. Herry his enouspovore meny

1. There must be a government of the tongue, in avoiding all biting reflections.

2. In abstaining from all reproachful words. sucht and lettern without diver

3. In observing tempers, so as to be very cautious before fuch as are easy in taking exceptions at what is faid used bluon bevo

4. In avoiding all kind of whispering, and carrying of stories from one to another, and relating what others have faid of them.

5. In suppressing all present resentments, and stifling ill-humour. and ment to ego too

11X ... 6. In

11

pe

fre

wh

pla

pee

the

ferv

ferv

diffi

wha

tien

not

6. In not being too positive or hot in

maintaining any cause.

7. In not hearkening to the fuggestions of a jealous or exceptious humour; but putting them by as unreasonable, indiscreet, and of ill consequence.

8. In putting the best construction upon every thing, and hoping the intention of persons not to be so bad as represented.

9. In giving mild answers to provoking and injurious language; in putting by affronts with a jest; or quitting company, if words grow too high.

10. In being filent, and not feeming to

hear or understand what was said.

being eafy and moderate, or filent, at least, when provocations are given.

12. In not being too nice in the point of

place, title, or other ceremony.

1

y

g

r,

ts,

In

13. In passing by all misconstructions and peevish expressions in letters, without giving them an answer.

These are some particulars, which, if observed, would help very much to the preserving of peace. Some of them may seem difficult, but there being not one point, but what is the effect either of charity, or of patience, or of humility, or meekness, there is not one of them but what belongs to every

Vol. XII. D

Christian, inasmuch as these virtues belong has many reasons for quarteling and illasor

2. Are there still any other helps in this particular? out anothing to mean ham

A. It may be a great help to confider, that the Gospel allows not of one of those occasions as sufficient for breaking peace, which are generally made the occasions of it. For observe;

1. If affronts or injuries are offered: The Gospel commands us to forgive injuries.

F

fel

2. If we are reproached or accused falsely: The Gospel commands us then to rejoice.

3. If others are uneafy or troublesome to us: Our rule is to bear with one another and forbear, and to be patient towards all.

4. If others are malicious, and do evil to us, we are commanded to pray for fuch, and do good for evil.

5. If any are our professed enemies: The Gospel commands us to love our enemies.

6. If any strike or wrong us: Our rule is, to fuffer with patience; and to offer ourfelves to fuster still more.

7. If we do well, and yet fuffer as evildoers; our rule fays, this is acceptable with God, according to the example of Christ, and ought to be matter of comfort.

Whoever confiders with attention these rules of the Gospel, will find, that however the carnal or natural man may think he has many reasons for quarrelling and breaking peace with his neighbours, yet the spiritual man, or Christian, can have none, but by forsaking the rule which he professes to follow.

2 If this be so, are not Christians very forgetful of their duty, who seem to have no regard to these rules; but let the same occasions be sufficient to them, for breaking

peace, as to the Heathen?

e

s,

T-

il.

th

ift,

efe

ver

A. I fear they forget their profession: There are too many figns of it in their little observance of what the Gospel teaches; but especially in this point: Every ordinary accident being enough for breaking peace, whereas nothing can be a sufficient warrant for it.



### CHAP. XV.

Of Loving our Neighbour, and Living in Charity and Peace with him.

HOW is this precept to be observed, of loving our neighbour as ourfelves?

A. Christ has declared it in these words:

Matt. vii. 12. Thus are we to love our neighbour.

2. How is this in particular?

would have others do to you; do that to

harm; neither in goods, or good name. Do then no wrong to others; nor let fall any word to the prejudice or lessening of any.

2. You would have others be civil and

respectful to you; be so to others.

3. You would have them affift and help you, in prayers, in advice, in whatever other affiftance your circumstances may require; and you would have them be fincere in what they do: Do you thus to others.

You would have them not to despise you for your defects, or misfortunes, or indiscretions; but to express a compassion towards you, and this not only from the lips, but sincerely from the heart: Do thus to others.

Q. There is no difficulty in doing this to our friends, and to whom we wish well; for so far nature and natural friendship teaches

iii a

to

th

have injured us, or are our enemies?

of doing to others, as we would have others do to us: As in particular;

1. You would have others forgive whatever injuries you have done them: Do you so to others.

2. You would have others forget all past disrespects or affronts; and, notwithstanding these, to be helpful to you, according to your wants: Do so to others.

3. You would have others not give credit to whatever stories they hear to your prejudice: Do you so to others.

4. You would have others put the best construction upon whatever you have said or done; and to lay to mistake or oversight; whatever may be taken in a worse sense: Do so to others.

e-

re

Se

n-

on

he

us

dw

to:

for hes friendly temper to you, and overlook whatever exceptions jealoufy might otherwise suggest in Do you so to others.

charity demands not one point of us, but what by this rule of nature we are bound to observe the minimum of the state of t

this rule; whose nature gives them such

D iij

strong aversions, that they cannot have a thought of such as they apprehend to be their enemies, but it is followed close with

hatred and defires of revenge?

A. If nature be so corrupt, they must labour to overcome it; and remember, that nature is not to be their rule, but the will of God. If they believe the Gospel does teach the way of salvation, they must either labour to walk according to it, or else never hope for its promises.

2. How far does the Gospel press this point of loving our neighbour, and even

our enemies?

A. It lays it down, as a duty without ex-

ception: See what it fays of it.

1. Christ declares this to be his precept:

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another," John xv. 12. So that whoever keeps not this, is not to be esteemed a follower of Christ, though he should observe all the rest.

2. He declares this to be the particular mark of his disciples: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another," John xiii. 35. So that whoever believes in Christ, and loves not his neighbour, cannot pretend to be a disciple of Christ.

3. He expressly requires this love to be

di

extended to our enemies: "I say unto you, love your enemies: Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that perfecute and abuse you: That ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; who makes his fun to rife upon good and bad, and rains upon the just and unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the Publicans this? And if you falute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the Heathens fo?" Matt. v. 44. In these words the command is politive: And a Christian, who falutes, loves, and does good to his friends only, and not to his enemies, is declared to be no better than a Publican or Heathen.

which we are to love our enemies: "Dearly beloved, revenge not yourselves, but give place unto wrath: For it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Therefore, if thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good," Rom. xii. 19.

re

0-

a

ve

ar

all

ye

nat

oc

dif-

be

2. The Gospel is plain, and it cannot be disputed what our duty is. But how great is the difficulty of putting it in practice?

Div

And the is not for great, as being eternally separated from God; and therefore is the subject of a rational choice. There is nothing but nature, that makes the opposition: And what is nature in the Christian's account? It is corrupt, it is finful, it leads from God, it is an enemy, it is treacherous, it destroys those that favour it, and leads to eternal death. And is there in this any thing that deferves to be esteemed or valued? Is it not rather contemptible, and what ought to be feared and hated by all that know it? The first principle of the Gospel requires us to stand against it, and deny it; to oppose, and mortify it; and what then is this to be fet up against God, fo as, upon the account of this, we should make it difficult to do what God himself commands us? We know how to laugh at, and pity those, who forsake the Living God, and give the preference of worship to idols of wood and stone: And is not our idolatry still more ridiculous, if we give the preference to our own nature, which we confess to be corrupt and finful, and pay our obedience to its commands, rather paffes, neither will your food? we radie

dent: But if some cannot do otherwise?

A. So fome deceive themselves, and

think they cannot s But if these would but but observed how they can manage their passions, when it is their interest to do it: how they can be civil, profess kindness, and offer fervice to their enemies, and fuch whom they hate; they may hence fee, that they can make nature bend, when they think fit to do it; and if upon a worldly account, why not for duty fake? Will not their own actions be their confusion in this point, and prove their excuse to be a lied

# finingà Chall A P. XVI.

d

d

lf

it,

ng

ip

ot

ve

ch

nd

her

evi-

and

Of Forgiving Injuries, and being reconciled after Quarrels.

2. IS there an obligation of forgiving injuries, and making peace?

A. There is: The Gospel lays this obligation upon its profesfors: Hear what it fays:

1. " If you forgive men their trefpasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trefpasses, neither will your Father forgive your trefpasses, Matt. vi. 14. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven, Luke vi. 37. His Lord faid unto him, O thou wicked fer-

vant, I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou defiredit me: Shouldft not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord being angry, delivered him to the tormentors, till he should repay all the debt: So alfo shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts," Matt. xviii. 32. So that whoever forgives not the injuries done him by others, cannot hope for mercy from God, for the pardon of his fins: And even that pardon which has been granted, will be revoked so far, as not to hinder, and (by reason of his ingratitude afterwards) even to increase his damnation.

and there rememberest that thy brother has any thing against thee: Leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming, thou shalt offer thy gift," Matt. v. 23. And is there not in this a plain declaration, that whoever is not reconciled to his neighbour, can find no acceptance with God; and that if he prays, his prayers shall not be heard.

could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and de-

an

pr:

of

har

Ou

liver my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profits me nothing," a Cor. xiii.
2. This is positive, that without charity, there can be no hopes of salvation.

Here is God's express word, that the obligation of forgiving injuries, and making peace with our neighbour, is so great, that whoever does it not, is excluded from all mercy; his fins cannot be forgiven; his prayer cannot be heard; and a facrifice of his goods and life to God, can avail him nothing.

2. And must I judge thus severely of all those, who being at difference, have an ill will to one another?

A. It is the judgment God's facred word makes of them: If they have any appeal from that, they may have some hopes: But if that stands good, the sentence must be allowed; and they have no remedy, but in being reconciled, and making peace.

Le How comes it then, that so many Christians are at difference with one another, and this without any seeming scruples and many of these being persons of good principles?

A. Some of these may not be so sensible of their duty as they ought. Others may have their passions too strong for them. Others may be persuaded that their passion.

vant, I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou defiredit me: Shouldft not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord being angry, delivered him to the tormentors, till he should repay all the debt: So alfo shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts," Matt. xviii. 32. So that whoever forgives not the injuries done him by others, cannot hope for mercy from God, for the pardon of his fins: And even that pardon which has been granted, will be revoked fo far, as not to hinder, and (by reason of his ingratitude afterwards) even to increase his damnation.

and there rememberest that thy brother has any thing against thee: Leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming, thou shalt offer thy gift," Matt. v. 23. And is there not in this a plain declaration, that whoever is not reconciled to his neighbour, can find no acceptance with God; and that if he prays, his prayers shall not be heard.

the

an

pri

of

Oth

could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and de-

liver my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profits me nothing," I Cor. xiii.
2. I his is positive, that without charity, there can be no hopes of salvation.

Here is God's express word, that the obligation of forgiving injuries, and making peace with our neighbour, is so great, that whoever does it not, is excluded from all mercy; his fins cannot be forgiven; his prayer cannot be heard; and a facrifice of his goods and life to God, can avail him nothing.

And must I judge thus severely of all those, who being at difference, have an ill will to one another?

A. It is the judgment God's facred word makes of them: If they have any appeal from that, they may have some hopes: But if that stands good, the sentence must be allowed; and they have no remedy, but in being reconciled, and making peace.

Christians are at difference with one another, and this without any feeming feruples and many of these being persons of good principles?

١,

at

I

ri-

e-

A. Some of these may not be so sensible of their duty as they ought. Others may have their passions too strong for them. Others may be persuaded that their passion.

att at iv dra in to all who are incerte

are just, and that they have reasons for what they do. There may be other occasions of it in others; but none of them
are a sufficient warrant for what they do.
For the precept of charity is indispensible;
God's word has so declared it; and those
who think they have sufficient reason to dispense with it, will find themselves under the
guilt of violating this great precept, where,
blinded by their own passions, they thought
themselves innocent.

are at difference with their neighbour?

A. They have but one thing to do, and that is, to remove all misunderstanding, and make peace. Thus the Gospel prescribes, and if they observe it not, their profession is spain.

Q. How are they to remove all misunder-

ti

Ъ

our

ci

th

m

tu

ard the

600

They may, by letters, twens gnibnathy,

A. Where temporal interest makes this necessary, there never wants contrivance for effecting it. If then persons seem to be at a loss, in not knowing how to accomplish it, they must suspect themselves, as not sincere in the case. See what all may do.

falute them with respect, and do it in such a manner, as to convince them there is fomething more than ceremony in it. This art is common to all who are sincere.

to them, and do it with that eafiness and freedom, as to convince them of their heart being free from all ill will against them.

3. They may speak friendly of them behind their backs, and to such persons, as in all likelihood will inform them of all that was said; and to such express their desires of being reconciled.

4. They may engage some proper persons to compose the difference between them.

to be ferviceable to them, or to their best friends.

6. They may wait upon them personally, and so frame their discourse with charity and friendship, as to remove not only misunderstanding, but even animosities and hatred too.

7. They may, by letters, prepare the way; by representing the truth of things, removing mistakes, asking pardon for whatever requires it, and making protestations, as circumstances may direct.

11-

ay

ch

is

his

Many other ways there are, proper for this purpose; but the temper and humour of persons, and the circumstances of the case must determine, which may be most effectual: For to undertake it, without consult-

an a commentor of all who are fincere.

ing this, may, through indifcretion, rather widen than close the breach.

2. But is not there more difficulty in

this, than all are willing to fubmit to?

A. There may be opposition made by ill nature, stubbornness, and pride; but there are motives enough to overcome the difficulty raised by these.

1. He that moves first for peace, shews

himself the better Christian.

2. He gives proof of a greater and more generous spirit.

3. He shews himself the wifer man.

4. He lays the foundation of a good conscience and of solid interior peace.

5. He does that which will gain the love

and esteem of all that are good.

These must be confessed the privileges of this charity, so that Christians, instead of thinking it a lessening to them to move first for peace, ought to be solicitous to do it, as a thing most honourable and most becoming their profession: And to be unwilling, ashamed, or to think it beneath them to do it, is to be unwilling, and ashamed to shew themselves better Christians than their neighbour.

Q. Is it not fomething unfashionable however to do so?

A. And this is what we ought to blush

th

the

at; to fee how contemptible it is to follow the Gospel, even amongst the professors of it. But whatever the mode be, let it be remembered, that they, who are ashamed of what Christ teaches, are ashamed of Christ: And he himself has said it: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory," Luke ix. 26. Shame therefore must not hinder the Christian from doing what the Gospel requires of him: For he that omits his duty upon this account, cannot pretend to the character of a disciple.

2. Is it not enough to be willing to be reconciled, when the other party feeks it?

A. And if he should never feek it, would not this be living out of charity? The Gofpel prescribes thus: "Go first to be reconciled to thy brother": And is not this more than flaying till the brother comes to him?

2. The Gospel here only speaks of him

who has done the injury.

A. It is true, but then it must be owned, First, That in quarrels, both fides are commonly guilty, more or less.

Secondly, That in this case, those who are the most to blame, often think themselves

the greatest sufferers.

even sometiment at Befides, he that refuses to make peace, or

to forgive, when he is solicited to it, is certainly guilty of the greater and most scandalous offence. But he was not so good as he should be, who will not seek peace and contrive to make up differences, but waits till he is importuned to do it: For however this may look like charity, it has too much pride and stiffness in it to pass for such.

with their neighbour, if they wish him no harm, and will have nothing to say to him?

A. So some delude themselves: But what is this more than what they do to common beasts: And how unlike to the charity of Jesus Christ and his Gospel? Can that be called love, and even the love of charity, which is only wishing no barm.

Q. But is it not something to go so far?

in

pl

ec

th

gin

be

Dala

wh

A. This is nothing, without going farther: Nay, in itself, it is generally deceit: Such persons having a real aversion or ill will, though something concealed: So that they cannot speak of such persons, but they betray a dislike; they cannot hear them commended, but with trouble; and it is a satisfaction to hear them undervalued, reproached, or ridiculed. Where the mind is thus affected, there is no true charity; for these motions are like the symptoms of a disease, which discover a distempered mind.

It is not fafe therefore to depend upon such a disposition, because it is generally deceitful. Rather this bulinels, of renewing charity, and making peace with a neighbour, ought to be subjected to the nicest examen; because it is often done by halves, it is done without fincerity; it is like a falle cure, which draws a fair skin over the wound, but leaves corruption at the bottom, which will foon break forth into a fore.

2. Can you suspect this infineerity in Christians?

A. There is too much reason for it. Obferve how every little accident is improved into a quarrel, by those who, after any confiderable difference, have been reconciled to each other. They have feemed, and it may be, thought themselves, fincere in what they did: But when the evil returns again, upon fuch very trivial provocations; is it not plain there was corruption that lay concealed, and that the reconciliation was not from the heart? And yet this is the condition the Gospel requires; that we every one " forgive our brethren from our hearts. Which, believe me, I fear, is but feldom done.

Who injure us?

e-

nd

y; fa

nd.

A. Christ answered this to Peter: Not only feven times, but feventy times feven; which seems to be without limit, as the love of God to us sinners was without measure: We are always to have charity in heart, and therefore in our hearts are always to pardon our enemies.

among the sulfied of the political terms of the

for allow to the knowledge of some world St.

### I w d C H A P. XVII.

Of Humility, Vanity, and Pride.

A. WHAT is the folid foundation of humility, and the best fence against pride?

A. The command of Christ and the

PL

lut

in

lec

GA.

pai

in t

knowledge of ourselves.

2. What is the command of Christ?

A. That we learn of him to be meek and humble of heart. That we be poor in spirit. That we exalt not ourselves. That if we humble ourselves, we shall be exalted. That we do nothing through strife or vainglory, but in humility, every one esteeming others better than themselves, Phil. ii. 3. That we put on humility, Col. iii. 12. That we teach humility one to another; for that God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble, 1 Pet. v. 5.

In these plain terms has God manifested

his will, and Christ laid his command upon us. Now what better foundation can a difciple have, than to know the will of his mafter? Christ then commanding us to humble ourselves, and by humility to seek to be exalted by him; this must be the rule of his followers.

2. How is the knowledge of ourselves a

help to this?

A. Because we cannot truly know ourfelves, but we must see enough to keep us humble, and to oblige us to confess the injustice of all pride.

2. Ashow?

A. First, we see ourselves, to be nothing of ourselves; and that whatever we have or hold, it is the gift of God, to whom the glory of it belongs: So that, in whatever we are distinguished from others, it is the pure effect of his mercy.

2. We fee filth and corruption in ourfelves, through the many fins we have committed; fo that our fouls are under the pol-

lution of a manifold guilt.

3. We see intolerable folly in ourselves, in busying ourselves about trifles, and neg-

lecting the great concern of eternity.

4. We fee madness in ourselves, in taking pains every day to make ourselves miserable, in being delighted in poison, and taking pleafure in things that are for our destruction.

ing a noble benefactor, and abusing his benefits, to the displeasure and offence of him

who has bestowed all upon us.

6. We see rebellion and treachery in ourselves, in professing ourselves servants of God, and yet taking self-love, the world, and the devil for our counsel, for transgressing the laws of God, and setting up their interest against his.

7. We see in ourselves all that is imperfect, mean, and contemptible; blindness, lameness, deafness, inconstancy, uncertainty, ignorance, rashness, stupidity, sottishness,

infentibility. but I wantowns I shared testate

Lastly, we see amidst all these characters of misery and unworthiness, a strong inclination to love, admire and magnify ourselves; we would have all others to believe us to be something worthy of esteem; and are even angry, if others do not express a value for us.

Now who is there that knows himself, and sees all these humbling ingredients, but must confess he is a poor, unhappy creature, that deserves to be despised by all, and that there cannot possibly be a more notorious injustice, than to value himself, and to contrive all means for making others believe him to be valuable? Here now is a solid

fend

mar the in fe

F

this able trend cence if prethem confe fubje real in the center of the confe fubje real in the center of the cente

nation to do comm felf, i hear much

himfe

honou fore fe defires real u foundation laid for humility, and a fure fence against pride a roBalaged aldon a gar

2. How is this to be put in practice?

A. Whoever studies seriously the commands of Christ, and is fully possessed with the true knowledge of himself, cannot fail in feeing the practice. garder toy has bot

First, He sees an injustice in setting forth this criminal clay, as honourable or valuaable to the world; and therefore either retrenches all unnecessary ornaments, magnificence at table, and pompous attendants; or if prudence obliges him to some degree of them; he retains still a poverty of spirit; confesses himself unworthy; and makes it a subject of greater humiliation, to see so much real unworthiness under so much state.

2. He fees an injustice in commending himself, and therefore checks all such inclinations; gives no encouragement to others to do it; and as often as they speak to his commendation, he confesses it, within him felf, not to be his due, and is troubled to hear fo much real unworthiness, to be for much contels no is a poor, unhan boulavidoum

3. He fees an injustice in having places of honour or preference given him; and there fore feeks them not, and suppresses even the defires of them; because he sees so much real unworthiness in himself, that honour feems rather a reproach than his due. And if respect be shewed him, he then grieves to see that esteemed which deserves to be de-

fpifed by all.

worthy of contempt, he sees it just, that others should have a mean opinion of him, that they should shew him no respect, and even despise him; and therefore as often as he is undervalued, affronted, reproached, or despised by any, he judges them in the right, and is so far from being provoked, that he thinks it as reasonable, as for useless things to be trampled under foot, or cast out of doors.

for his fins, worthy of contempt; he fees it just, that God should treat him as he deferves; and therefore wonders not at any misfortunes, afflictions, sickness, or other trials that befal him, but confessing all to be his due, he humbles himself as an offender, under the hand of justice.

6. Upon the same principle, he endeavours even to rejoice under all kind of contempt; because he sees this to be according to justice, and that it is good for this proud clay to be humbled, and, by this way, kept in the true knowledge of itself.

7. Upon the same principle again, he is

he of ma is I of upo ty;

CO

men is a rule, recei dost ed it

tem

where world

fighs fion to and the

careful to repel all kind of thoughts, in which he is inclined to give himself the preference to others; and much more those, which lay others under contempt: Because having a sense of his own manifold unworthiness, and not of others; he sees no body contemptible but himself, and therefore always judges the last place to be his due.

Lattly, Whatever particular advantages he has, whether of nature, fortune, or even of divine grace; and whatever esteem he may have from others on this account; yet is he always careful to suppress all thoughts of pride and self-esteem; because he looks upon himself under his own natural poverty; and seeing nothing here but what is contemptible, accordingly he retains the judgment of himself: And as for whatever esse is above this, he remembers Saint Paul's rule, "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" I Cor. iv. 7.

Le If this be the practice of humility, where is it to be found? Does not the whole

world run contrary to all this?

A. This ought to be answered rather in fighs than words. It ought to be a confusion to us to see how much pride prevails, and that the practice of it is become so uni-

verfal, that it feems above reproach or cenfure. But, however, though it be very general, and its authority very great, from what custom has given it; yet still nothing of this evacuates the Gospel; and what here is declared finful and detestable to God. cannot by the practice of a wicked world. be made innocent, Such, therefore, as defire at the last hour to be found Christians more than in name, ought to take their meafures of all things from the Gospel, and be afraid of pride, as of an infernal monster, under what shape soever it appears. And if they fee it in honour and esteem, this ought not to give them a better opinion of it; fo that, though the christian world, like the rest, seems to make a facrifice of all they have to its service, though it commands their purses, furnishes their tables, provides them cloaths, has the general influence on their words and carriage, and is principally confidered in every circumstance of life; yet the fincere followers of the Gospel ought to have an abhorrence of it, as of a thing hateful to God, and most pernicious o man.

Be trown much tribe prevaile

to of smapped at it be detained

Upon

ral a

this

which

Now

wish

profe

agree

pects

admir

the w

Chris

is the

to the

promis conful to foll the wa

Vol.



Marine the second

# C H A P. XVIII.

Upon the same Subject of Pride.

Q. I SEE you are for cutting off many things, which the world and custom encourage,

because you think them in favour of pride?

A. I cannot but fear pride has too general an influence upon most persons, and that this is consulted more than the will of God. which yet is the rule, we pretend to follow. Now this I could wish reformed. I could wish all christians would be true to their profession; not considering what is most agreeable to nature, or what the world expects, or what is most likely to make them admired; but what is most conformable to the will of God, and to the Gospel, which Christ has left us for our instruction. This is the method of a true christian, and leads to the perfection of the Gospel, and to its promifes: But to take the other way, of confulting felf-love, the world, and pride, is to follow idols instead of God, and must be the way to eternal death.

Vol. XII.

Q. If a person should take this self-denying way, may not be still be as proud under

A. Yes he may, and more; for if such an one should begin to entertain great thoughts of himself, for what he has done, and despise others, who live in greater pomp, as blind sinners, he has only changed his pride from carnal to spiritual, and with the pharise may be cast off as a reprobate by God, while, in his own opinion, he is setting himself above his neighbours. I own therefore, there may be a more dangerous pride in those, who despise the world, than in those who are solicitous in sollowing all the ways of its notorious vanities.

Q. Is this an encouragement to reform?

A. It ought to be no discouragement, from endeavouring to amend, although it be certain, the fall from a higher place is the more dangerous. It is the same here in this, as in all other virtues: But notwithstanding the danger, there are still great encouragements for a christian to renounce the common methods of pride in the world.

First, In the satisfaction of conscience, that he does not purposely feed that pride, which is in him; nor employ his thoughts, nor his study, nor his time, nor his money

in its fervice.

lui

wit pro whi the

this agai

who

13:4

so the field other from noun pride

when for a f.

attire.

put by that ar 2. That if thoughts of vanity at any time disturb him, he may hope they are not voluntary, fince he contributes nothing to them.

3. That while he forfakes the ways of pride, and labours to overcome it, he may with greater confidence hope, that God will protect him, by his grace, against this evil, which has made captive the great part of the world.

4. That he gives no encouragement to this vice by his ill example, but rather stands

against it, and declares it to be folly.

These comforts may the christian have, who cuts off all, that he suspects to be the effect of pride, in whatever belongs to him. So that he may with good grounds be satisfied in the choice of his method, though others reproach him, of not being exempt from the evil, which he pretends to renounce, and that there may be as much pride under rags, as under the most costly attire.

Q. How are christians to resist this evil, when it perplexes their thoughts, and puts in for a share in all they do?

A. They must, at the first appearance, put by all such thoughts, as they do others, that are sinful, and protest against them.

Etij mini

The furest method is, in the morning, to of. fer themselves and all they are to do, that day, to God; to protest, they defire and feek no other glory, but his, and that if other thoughts occur in the day, they from their heart renounce them. In the beginning of every action, a like oblation may be made of it to God, defiring his affiftance, in rejecting whatever fuggestions of pride shall present themselves: And then, if any appear, to cast them off, quietly and without folicitude, is what may fatisfy a good con-Icience: Since the foul not concurring in them, neither by calling for them, nor purposely entertaining them, they are not to be esteemed wilful; and, therefore, are to be reckoned the temptations, but not the fin of

Q. And if a christian should come thus far, as to follow the ways of humility, and reject the common suggestions of pride, is he then secure

from this vice?

A. No; for if he thinks himself humble, he may be proud of this: Such is the unhappy temper of this weed, it grows upon all soils, and if not carefully watched, thrives by the very means of rooting it out.

Q. What then do you advise christians to do

in this case?

the and the author to before to they

oufly what who for who is

in mu that i guilt it, to the co

exami

A. To follow the Apostles advice, in working out their salvation with fear and trembling. They are still to fear, when they have done all they can; because when they have turned their backs upon this vice, and quitted all its known ways; when they have run from it for many years, and taken shelter under the most rigorous discipline of austerity and retirement, it may still meet them again, and turn to its own advantage, all the endeavours they use against it. This being their case, what have they to do, but to be always fearful of themselves, and to beseech God to stand by them, that, by his grace, they may be protected from this evil, to which, through their natural weakness, they are so much exposed?

Q. If this be the case of those, who industriously flying this vice, take pains to overcome it; what must be the unhappiness of other christians, whose life is under the conduct of pride, and who have general custom to warrant what they

do?

A. These being more exposed, must be in much more danger; and it is to be feared, that many of these live under the continual guilt of this sin, though God has declared it, to be so hateful to him. Observe but the common and received method of these; examine their clothes, their furniture, their

E iij

attendants, their table, their visits, their words, their mien, their actions, their defires of preferment, of titles, of place, the disposing of their children, and whatever else belongs to human life; and there appears such an evidence of seeking themselves, and human glory in what they do, and so little signs of their glorifying God, that it is to be suspected, they neither know themselves nor God, and that instead of seeking to do the will of God, they are carried on by pride, and think of little besides pleasing and magnifying themselves: And is not all this contrary to the Gospel?

this

is I

tho

rep

mal

the

. (

men

which tion thy n

do y

by refion,

this ]

mental duty; even of the charity and love; which we one appearance. It is a violation of that greater appearance of the state of his inter-which field of the that have of his inter-which field of the that have of his inter-which field of the that has our capits.

the anather emble of the has made injuried to

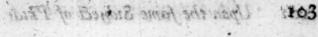
A. Because it is the wreach of a hadda-

O Why thought tou be a greek a line

" As ye would, that men frould do to you, do you also so them," Labers' 3 see as a second so the second suffice,

by relating more then is true: Jugaran, par-

the land and there by no learne any maky



### words, their mien, their actions, their de three of prefection, .A.H.D of parce, it

min's but and the children and wanted

Of Detraction or Speaking ill of our Neighbour. pears fuch an evidence of feelchio there when

Q. IS there reason for christians to be soru-pulsus in what they say of their neighbour behind his back? Talken words to begin ad of

A. There is great reason to be careful in this point, because detraction or backbiting is numbered by St. Paul among the fins of those, who are "given over by God tora reprobate mind," Rom. i. 30. Enough to make christians very cautious; this being the most terrible of all his judgments.

Q. Why should this be so great a sin?

A. Because it is the breach of a fundamental duty, even of that charity and love, which we owe our neighbour. It is a violation of that great precept; Thou Shalt love thy neighbour, as thyself.

2. It is a transgression of that law of nature, which God has written in our hearts: " As ye would, that men should do to you,

do you also to them," Luke vi. 31.

3. It is generally an offence against justice, by relating more than is true. Malice, pajfion, envy, and ill-will are always unjust in this kind; and there being scarce any story

of our neighbour, but these have a part in the relating it, it must be with evident danger of an injustice, to report or credit any

thing of this kind.

4. And if there can be supposed no passion, yet still there must be generally a great rashness: Because the words and actions of our neighbour (as well as our own) depend upon particular circumstances, and upon the intention, purpofes and defign of their hearts; and without the knowledge of these, it is rashness to judge of them. Now, who can pretend to have a knowledge of these, which are seldom truly known to any, befides God himfelf? Let every chriftian reflect, how often others have been unjust to him, by reporting his words and actions, without a knowledge of his intention, the occasions, or other material circumstances; and by this he will be convinced, how rash it must be for him, to make any reports to the prejudice of his neighbour.

5. But if it be supposed, that a person is sully convinced of the truth and the whole truth of what he relates: Yet if the infamous fact be private, it is a grievous sin both against charity and justice, to publish it, or even to speak of it to others without necessity. Besides, the party concerned may, by an humble and true repentance, have made

W

ou

in lib S. fen

tra

deg thir cou any

to g

fron

and

his peace with God, and be free from the guilt of past offences or follies: Is it then a friendly office, for any to punish, and make him suffer in his reputation for such sins, which now are not; and to represent him under infamy, when now he is in favour with God.

Q. If this be the nature of detraction, ought not all to be very watchful against it?

A. So watchful, that I think none can pretend to the truth of piety, or to be ferious in the business of falvation, that takes here a liberty, and is not heartily afraid of it. S. Bernard being of opinion. that this vice fends more to hell than any other.

Q. Is there any difference in the sins of de-

traction?

A. There is great difference, and many degrees of this fin: As First, to report any thing prejudicial to our neighbour, for difcourse fake or unadvisedly, without thinking any harm.

2. To do it, in compliance or flattery or to gain favour with one, who is pleafed to

hear fuch reflecting reports.

3. To do it, with some satisfaction arising

from diflike or ill-will to the party.

4. To do it out of malice or revenge, and with a defign of doing him an injury.

party has an interest, and depends on their good opinion of him.

6. To do it, by relating the truth only, and fuch as is already known to many,

though not public. And was a state inch.

7. To do it, by discovering what was be-

fore unknown, though true.

8. To do it, by adding some exaggerating circumstances, and relating things as certain, which are not certain.

g. To do it, by accusing a person falsly, following the suggestions of malice or passion.

10. To do it to one person, or in public.

cle

lif

the

ou

it,

37

ing

per

tun

rela

fati

will

us t

and

ther

...

thing, which may be fome lessening to the good opinion of a person.

12. To do it, in a case, wherein his reputation is concerned, and cannot sail of being prejudicial to him in some matter of

moment.

of good esteem, or of no reputation; a magistrate, an ecclesiastic, a parent, &c.

These, with other like circumstances, ought to be examined in all sins of detraction or backbiting, and by these may be discerned the weight of the sin.

O. If a person means no harm, surely the sin cannot be very great, in what he says

A. It may be very great; because, in things belonging to our neighbour, we are obliged to confider before-hand, and be filent as to every thing, that is likely to inhim, whether we intended it, or no him orot

O. But if the thing be truth; can there be a fin in speaking truth?

A. Would you think it well, to have every thing made public, which might be faid with truth of you? The case then is clear, that fuch truths ought not to be published, which are likely to be prejudicial to the party concerned; charity or the love of our neighbour forbids it, and they, who do it, offend against charity, and justice too.

Q. If the thing be already public?

A. Then there is no defamation, in relating it. But still there may be a fault, if a person be pleased in his neighbour's misfortunes, or indifcretions, or takes delight in relating them. And, if there be no fuch fatisfaction; yet it is what a good christian will be willing to avoid: For charity inclines . us to the concealing our neighbour's faults; and not to the pointing at them and making them more remarkable. The was being able

Q. If a person speaks not of any such misfor-

tunes, but it is always accompanied with expressions of compassion and trouble for their

neighbour?

A. This is generally a cheat; a pretext of piety for taking liberty without scruple. Were the compassion true, it would choose to be filent, rather than bring fuch a difagreeable subject upon the board. None can. pretend greater tenderness, than for themfelves; and when did you ever hear a person making his own indifcretions or known fins, the subject of public discourse, upon the motive of compassion to himself? This is never done of any person present; and cannot be, but by disobliging the party concerned, which is no great argument of compassion.

Q. But may not a christian speak of another's failing to a superior friend or director, who is capable of giving advice and reforming

them?

A. This is a duty, to which christians many times are strictly obliged. But then we should do well to consider the motive upon which we do it: That it be not to fatisfy the inclination we have, of speaking of our neighbour's faults, more than for the desire of doing him any good: Because this inclination is fometimes fo modest, as not willing to appear, but under the veil of charity.

ing int

ent

Bu tha arh to t

cha that avoi may

• prej

hear

the d helpi or by of it

# CHAP. XX.

the estion or an execution

## Of bearing Detraction or Backbiting.

Q. IF detraction or backbiting be so great a sin, how can a christian avoid having a part in it; since he can scarce come into any company, but this is one part of his entertainment?

A. I wish I could question what you say. But though in speculation I think it impossible that the followers of Christ should so familiarly converse with what is thus contrary to their rule, so unnatural, so unjust, so uncharitable; yet I must own the fact; and that the evil being so general, it is hard avoiding the guilt. But however something may be done.

Q. Tell me first, when the guilt of this sin falls upon him, that hears one speak to the

prejudice of another?

A. When he is pleased or takes delight in hearing it: When he any ways encourages the discourse, either by asking questions, or helping out the discourse or confirming it, or by pleasing smiles, shews his approbation of it; for all this is joining with him that

fpeaks, and confequently partaking of his guilt.

Q. If this be the case, what is to be done?

A. The circumstances of persons must be observed. When one is chief in the company, or we are amongst those, with whom we can be so familiar, the surest way must be to reprove such discourse, but still with prudence, and in such a manner, as may give no offence.

2. Where this cannot be done, a person may take the first opportunity and divert the

discourse, by starting some other. The start of

3. Or he may undertake to be advocate for the absent, by excusing or putting the best constructions on what will bear it, or making things doubtful, which cannot be excused; or by suggesting hopes of amendment.

4. Where there cannot be this freedom, a person may fit in filence, and being interiourly displeased at the discourse, seem to give no attention to it.

5. And where nothing else will do, he may take occasion to leave the company.

Some fuch means ought to be made use of, for not concurring in the detraction and having no part in its guilt.

Q. Circumstances may render this very

difficult?

he we are can

to b

fa

like tho And cause qual fpea amp man

affen disob belie

cont

A. They may do so, and yet courage with some contrivance may take off much of the difficulty. Few want courage, even among their betters, to defend the cause of their own good name; and find many salvo's to prevent any thing being fixt upon them to their prejudice. And why not some of this same courage and ingenuity in our neighbour's behalf? The cause is good, and the Gospel justifies the undertaking it. But here is the misery, we are ashamed to do well, and awed by an ill-placed modesty, we are not bold enough to appear in a good cause. And thus ill custom gains upon the Gospel.

Q. You will however allow the difficulty to to be great in those, who have dependance?

A. Here must be a great temptation, as likewise, as often as we are in company of those, whom we are unwilling to disoblige. And this, in the first place, ought to be a caution to those, who have any degree of quality, authority, or superiority, not to speak evil of any; since, besides the ill example they give, they generally make as many flatterers as hearers, who, though contrary to their conscience, will seem to assent to what is said, rather than venture to disoblige, by telling the truth of what they believe or know: And thus the guilt spreads.

But then, Secondly, those who have a dependance, and all others, ought to remember, that whoever flatters or complies with another in any thing finful, upon human considerations, is not to be called a disciple, because a true disciple forsakes all for Christ, chooses the will of God before all things, and therefore such cannot have this character, who have a greater regard to worldly interest, than to the commands of Christ, and who will rather join in what is evil, than lose the favour of those with whom they discourse.

Q. Then you would not have christians be

civil?

A. There is as much place for shewing civility in what I direct, as in any other case whatever; I would have all things be done with great respect: there is no need of being rude, to be a christian. But certainly they extend civility too far, who require a compliance in what is sinful. And if it be rudeness to dissent, it is what the Gospel prescribes.

Q. But if some are easy in taking exceptions?

A. Deal with them in their own way,

fuch as may give the least offence, and be most beneficial to them; for so prudence directs. They must be prepared with great moderation, meekness, sweetness, and pawi.

ta

an

m

no feie Go falfi for

of in those give unit

as upare turbo

A.

fuffe

what portu themi quite tience, who will do this well. The works of the Gospel are to be done by the ways and rules of the Gospel; to the want of this must be laid the miscarriage of good undertakings.

Q. But while thus you speak of detraction; what advice can you give him, of whom many things are said to the lessening his reputation?

A. The best way, in most cases is to take no notice of what is said; but to fit down contented under the peace of a good conscience. There is a blessing promised in the Gospel, to those who are revised or accused sailly: This blessing ought to be a motive for a patient submission: It ought to be a comfort to innocence that God is the witness of it: And since Christ is at the head of those who are publicly revised, this ought to give satisfaction to such as see themselves united to him in the resemblance of his sufferings.

Q. Then you have no great opinion of fuch, as upon every word spoken to their disfavour, are moved with passion, and with great dif-

turbance, express their refentments.

A. These do not practise the Gospel, whatever they may know of it. Such opportunities are the very time of proving themselves christians; and, in these, to do quite contrary to what is prescribed, is to

forget their profession. Hear what S. Peter says: "If doing well, you suffer patiently, this is acceptable before God; for unto this are you called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you may follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not," I Pet ii. 20.

Q. What is the import of this?

A. That if a christian, doing well and living without offence, be reproached, reviled, or falsly accused by evil tongues, he ought to suffer it patiently, according to the example of Christ; it being the very thing to which we are called: And in so doing he will find favour with God, which those are not to expect who upon such provocations break forth into passion and bitterness.

Q. Is there any thing more you advise upon

this Subject? The factor and the state of th

A. That a christian for his own peace, give no countenance to such busy friends, as inform him, what others have said of him; but rather, that he absolutely forbid it, as an ill office, such as can have no other effect, but to give disquiet, and lay seeds of misunderstanding between friends. Whence those may see, what they have to

for fuctors about or tur

an

feei giv

him the

which his good truth he cover

time Q bimfi

cauf

A and

amend, who practice this informing trade; for certainly the guilt and mischiefs of it are such, that a christian would suffer less by having a padlock on his lips, than by this abuse of them; which still has an additional guilt, if some private interest, or slattery, or compliance be the occasion of his thus turning informer.

Q Is there no exception in this?

A. Yes, when charity and prudence forefeeing mischief designed against a neighbour, give notice of it, for its prevention.

Q. Well, but if a person be injured in his reputation by ill tongues, would you not advise him, to do right to himself, by making known

the truth?

A. A man is no more bound to stand still, while his good name is taken away, than his goods; and therefore it must be allowed to do himself right; as far as he can by a peaceable and quiet remonstrance of the truth; and having done this with discretion, he ought then to sit in peace under the cover of a good conscience, and leave his cause to God, to manifest the truth in due time.

Q. But if a Person has drawn infamy upon bimself?

A. He must then bear it with patience, and receive all, that is said of him, as a

penance justly due to his folly or fins; and by a more than ordinary exemplarity, endeavour to recover the credit he has lost.



### CHAP. XXI.

### Of Lying.

Q. WHAT opinion is a christian to have of lying?

A. A very ill one, such as the word of

God teaches him.

Q. What does the word of God fay of lying?

A. First, it declares, "That lying lips are an abomination to the Lord: But they that deal truely are his delight, Pro. xii.

2. " That God will destroy those that

fpeak lies," Pf. v. 6.

3. "That christians ought not to lie one to another," Col. iii. 9. "But that putting away lying, every man should speak truth with his neighbour," Eph. iv. 25.

4. " That a righteous man hateth lying,"

Pro. xiii. 5.

In this manner ought a christian to think of lying; That it is hateful in the fight of God; that it will be feverely punished by

hin

oth

wro neig be d

that of I

out a

N

there is no they voking Lord penta

O.
officio
A.

whic

Rev.

and t

him; and therefore that the servants of God ought to hate it and avoid it.

Q. Are all lies alike sinful?

A. No, some are more provoking than

others; fee the difference.

Some lies are fpoken with a design to do wrong to others, as in accusing an innocent neighbour, or in denying a debt known to be due, and are called malicious lies.

Others are defigned in favour of those that speak them, or of others; as in excuse of some fault, or to prevent reproof, and

are called officious lies.

Others are only in merriment, and without any farther defign, and are called *jefting* lies.

Now in the first sort of malicious lies, there is an evidence of wickedness, which is not in the other two; and consequently they must be greater fins and more provoking, such as are an abomination to the Lord. And such liars, without a sincere repentance, "shall have their part in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. xxi. 8.

Q. And what of the other two forts of officious and jesting lies; are these lawful?

A. No, you see they are set down, as sins, and therefore cannot be lawful.

berthing of early a very it tout book

Q. What think you then of fuch, as live in

the general practice of them? too to live and

A. I cannot think well of them; for though the best may be sometimes surprised; yet to live in the practice of what we know to be sinful, to take no care in reforming it, to go on with a certain peace of conscience, amidst such repeated transgressions, shews a very ill temper of mind, such as is in danger of forgetting God, and falling away from him. And therefore I cannot but earnessly importune those; who are subject to it, to use all possible means for overcoming such an ill custom, and to give no rest to their souls, till they have effected it.

Q. Is there not difficulty in mastering such

a custom?

A. There is certainly in all customs: But what then; is the difficulty of doing it, sufficient motive for not doing it? All the ways of salvation are difficult to a corrupt nature; and yet whoever walks not in them, must be without hope. Where salvation is the cause, nothing must discourage from pursuing it. They are scarce in earnest, who make these objections.

. Q. What are they to do, who defire to over-

come fuch an ill custom of lying?

A. They are to confider every day,

the

30

is d a w hee

be free ger ther doin

a str 6. custo of G

575

refolican; God beg part i more readin or re

of alm fome First, that the duty of a christian is to do the will of God.

2. That lying is not according to the will of God.

3. That to live in the practice of what is displeasing to God, shews a want of love, a want of respect; it betrays a neglect, a

heedlessness, an indifferency.

4. That to go on in such a way cannot be safe: That since all depends upon the free grace of God, there must be great danger of being deprived of this help, where there is so little solicitude to please him, by doing his will.

5. Therefore the foul is bound to keep

a strict watch against this evil.

6. She must be resolute in not letting customs or inclination take place of the will of God.

7. And as often as she falls short of her resolutions, she must retire, as soon as she can; prostrate herself to the ground, before God in the humble confession of her fault, beg pardon and increase of grace; then take part with justice and punish her sin, by some more than ordinary task of prayers, or of reading, or of confinement from company, or restraint from desired divertisement, or of alms, or of visiting the poor or sick; by some such humiliation, designing to make

nature fearful of offending, and more eafy 于"拉下好"。 新疆 语 [16] 166 [18] 16]

in fubmitting.

Such christians, as follow this method. with a fincere defire of amendment, and persevering in this defire, without letting any discouragements take place, will find God their helper, and, by his affifting and frengthening grace, recover from their ill habits.

Laftly, They must examine every day, what is the occasion of this ill custom in them. Whether it be a heedlefsness, or a vain humour, or what elfe it be; and from thence endeavour to be ashamed of displeafing God, and hazarding falvation upon

fuch an account.

They may add the consideration of their own credit and good name: For certainly the custom of lying makes a man contemptible; it shews a person to be rash, inconsiderate; to have a light and vain head; to have no value or regard for truth; one, that cannot be depended on for whatever he fays; fo that amidst all the advantages he may otherwise have, of learning, riches, beauty, wit, &c. it is not possible for a wife or good man to have any real efteem for him.

By fuch confiderations a christian may overcome himself; and though not at once, lie. to

to arr lies

tha dif lies ferv mer this fine crea oug upor fentl their to v And repre rally floth. more

yet

yet by continued endeavours the victory may be expected; for industry joined with perfeverance overcomes all difficulties.

Q. But do you give no allowance to excusive lies, by which a person intends no more, than to defend himself?

A. There can be no excuse for these.

First, Because it is in some degree, going to the devil for help; and taking up his arms, for making a defence: Because all lies are from the devil.

2. Because it betrays a greater fear of man than of God; and is the choice of rather displeasing God than man. For all fuch lies, are to the displeasure of God, and the fervice of them is to keep off the anger of men. Now there is fuch an unworthiness in this, that a christian ought to blush at it, fince it is, in some kind, the setting the creature above God. And what a confusion ought this to be to fuch christians, who, upon the least apprehension of blame, prefently take shelter in a lie; whereas it is their duty, rather to fuffer all reproofs, than to ward it by fuch unwarrantable means? And is not this much aggravated; that the reproof they apprehend, is what they generally draw upon themselves, through their floth, or neglect, or forgetfulness, or some more wilful fault; and whereas they know Vol. XII.

reproof to be their due, and that they ought in justice to bear it, in punishment of their fault; instead of this, to add fault to fault, and to defend themselves against justice by a lie, has something so unjust and unbecoming the christian, that he ought to have an abhorrence of the practice, and choose rather to embrace the reproof he deserves, than buy his peace at the price of offending God.

> 44 44

roll years gods bod, published

in dre the into fpea fuch

fauli to the as of this, likew fome to ly or va frience

al



### CHAP. XXII.

Of Lying, Curfing, and Swearing.

Q. A CUSTOM of lying being difficult to overcome, is it not best to stand against

it in the beginning?

A. It is fo in all other cases; for custom always creates difficulty: It grows infenfibly, and is not to be overcome, but by violence. Hence it must be a very christian discretion in parents, to be watchful over their children in this point; and if they observe in them any inclination to lying, not to favour them upon any account; but to examine into the truth of whatever they have reason to suspect; to encourage them in dways speaking the truth, and to reward them for fuch truths, as they tell, in owning their faults, or that any other ways may feem to to their prejudice; with a certain correction as often as they are catched in a lie. And this, not only while they are children, but likewise as they grow up; because there are fome in their youth very remarkably given to lying, either through a giddy, heedless, or vain humour; and if no care be used by friends for reforming it, they are in danger F ij

of living always under the discredit of it, and carrying the guilt of it to their graves.

Q. What do you think of using equivocations? A. This is not to be encouraged; it being not agreeable to the simplicity of the Gospel, which requires, That our " communion be, yea, yea, nay, nay," Mat. v. 37. And if not commendable in ordinary conversation, much less before magistrates, when justice is concerned, and a person upon oath, is obliged to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth. In fuch cases the plain truth is to be declared, and nothing to be palliated, difguifed, or hid by equivocation; because all such contrivances are injurious to truth.

Q. And are you so strict to the letter, in ordinary conversation, as to require every one to answer the plain and direct truth, when curigsity or malice may ask such designing questions, as cannot be thus answered without great injury to matters of the highest concern, as of fortune,

th

h

US

OT

th

fc

an

life, good name, &c.? maning men violenad

A. In the case you mention, you are not bound to give a direct answer; and may lawfully conceal the truth from an unjust or impertinent enquirer. But to lye, or to equivocate, can never be lawful. di lacasol

Q. What think you of fuch expressions in

words or writing, which are not literally true, and yet are not intended to deceive?

A. As general practice or custom has made them current in any sense, so they may be used, though not literally true. For where the meaning is known, there can be no deceit. It is the same, when a person relates a sable, as a sable, or any other way relates what is not true, yet so, as in the manner of doing of, or by the tone of his voice, he discovers plainly his meaning, and takes away all occasion of deceiving the hearers. For this he neither speaks against his own knowledge, nor imposes upon others; and therefore it cannot be censured for a lie.

Q. What opinion is a christian to have of

A. He is to judge it to be a great wickedness and scandalous crime.

Q. Wby fo?

A. Because it is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, which is the spirit of meekness,

humility and patience.

2. It is contrary to charity, which obliges us to love our neighbours, whether friends or enemies, to help them, and to wish them all good. And what a crime and scandal then must it be, to wish misfortunes and damnation to those, for whose salvation

Christ shed his blood, and for whom we are bound to defire all happiness?

3. It is contrary to all, that the Scripture prescribes, of forgiving injuries, praying for persecutors, doing good for evil, &c. Contrary to the character of Christ's disciples, and to that special command, which Christ appropriates to himself, of loving one another.

Upon which considerations, christians ought to have a horror of cursing, as of a thing not only unbecoming, but even contrary to their profession, and as a kind of renouncing, all that they believe. For so it is, in fact, when a person acts like an unbeliever, and without any more regard to what Christ teaches, than if he were a heathen. Cursing then is what ought not to be heard from a christian's mouth, being being nothing less, than taking part with the devil, and espousing his interest, in desiring the destruction of man.

Q. And what do you fay of swearing.

A. I fay, that those, who have a custom of swearing, live under the guilt of a great fin.

First, because it is an absolute transgreffion of God's commandment, who has forbidden his name to be taken in vain, and in express terms declared the guilt of those, that do it. by "

ne be co

ma tha na

am

fwe Go coi and this the for

the

Cor

2. Because it is expressly contrary to the Gospel, to the doctrine and will of Christ. "I say unto you, swear not at all, neither by heaven,—nor by earth," Mat. v. 34. "Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation," Jam. v. 12.

man in danger of swearing rashly, and even that which is false: Which is a sin to dam-

nation.

ample to others, whence it must be owned, that those christians, who have a custom of swearing, live in the daily prophanation of God's holy name, in the violation of God's commandments, and the contempt of Christ and his Gospel. And what a character is this of persons, who believe in God and in the Gospel, and that there is no salvation for those, who obey not the commands of God, and walk not as Christ has taught?

Q. But if christians have no such malice in their bearts, but surfe or swear out of a custom

only, without meaning any barm?

A. Then they have a custom of prophaning God's holy name, and doing contrary to his commands; and how does this excuse their

fin, who know they ought not to do fo? If a person should have a custom of abusing holy things, as the temple, the holy vessels, the Holy Scripture, &c. would the custom of doing it, be a moderation of the crime? Rather this is the greatest aggravation: That a christian, who believes it his duty always to obey God, not only offends him, but likewise lives on in the custom of offending him, and makes it his continual practice to do so. For this involves in it the greatest of all contempts, and shews the soul to have no regard to God.

Q. But if custom has made this look great,

and to be a kind of ornament of speech?

A: There can be nothing great or honourable, which is dishonourable to God. And nothing discovers a greater baseness in a soul, than not to have a respect for God; for to despise him, is the lowest degree of all, that is mean and unworthy, such as is not found in the devils, who fear God and tremble, but cannot despise him. And to make this an ornament of speech is again another unworthiness, that equals the former: Since nothing can be more unworthy of a christian, than to raise himself by treading upon the commandments; and to think that is a grace to his discourse, which is the prophanation of God's holy name. Robbing the

alta or cril

chr

The felv

cust wit

fubj plea cere then the cafe can

how must in ea to h altar for the better furnishing a play-house or the stage, would be a more tolerable fa-Q. Then you are for giving no quarter to crilege.

christians, who have this ill custom?

A. There can be no excuse for them. They must either mend, or believe themfelves not ferious in the profession of christianity.

But if they are troubled at their ill custom, and break forth into such expressions, without thinking or knowing what they fay?

A. If they are heartily troubled for being subject to this ill custom, because it is difpleasing to God, and upon this motive fincerely defire and labour to overcome it; then there may be some excuse for what is the effect of an ill habit only; for in this case it being really contrary to their will, it cannot be reputed a wilful fin. But then, how watchful must they be, and what pains must they take, to give proof of their being in earnest, in the trouble, which they feem to have for their fault, and in their defires of mending it lo verrown store per se unidios

raile himfelf by treading upon the commandments and to think that is a grace to big discours, which is the prophanation V Tod's boly name. Robbing the



Of Sweaking or Carling; Esc.

# CHAP. XXIII.

Of due endeavours for overcoming the ill habit of swearing or cursing. And of taking God's name in vain.

Q. IT was thus refolved, that a person subject to these ill customs, lies under a criminal and scandalous guilt, if he does not use due endeavours for overcoming them: Now what if a christian has endeavoured and finds he can do nothing?

A. This is a plea not to be allowed in a christian; it being nothing, but the pretext of floth or impatience, which are very hasty in despairing, that a cause being given over, there may be no more pains taken about it.

Q. What then must be do?

A. He is in the broad way to destruction, and does he ask, what he must do? He must leave nothing untried, nor think of ever desisting from his endeavours, till he recovers a better way. All is to be done for eternity. See what this may be.

First, Let him observe, how easily he can command his tongue, when those are present, whom he really respects or fears; or from whom it is his interest to conceal this fail-

th m

to account was take

It h

14

ear

doe mot his Good The again ed what habi

appo agair on b other

all f

thus

ing. This will foon convince him, that the thing is very possible, and that his defines might be effected, if he either loved or feared God, or had a fense of the dependence he has upon him.

2. Let him remember, that his business is to learn to love and fear God: And that for accomplishing this, he must forfake his old ways, his companions, and himself; and take fuch a guide, as may thew him how to begin a new life, and put on the new man: It being not possible for any to come to the love of God, if they still walk on in the ways of death.

1.3. Let him conclude himself not to be in earnest, if he does not thus. And if he does thus, he will in a fhort time find the motions of his foul, and the fentiments of his heart quite changed. The knowledge of God will make him fearful of offending: The fear of fin will make him watchful against it. This watchfulness will be attended with a folicitude for maltering his evil habits; and where fincerity and industry are thus joined, there can be no danger of a difappointment; because God cannot stand against such endeavours; but being prevailed on by prayers, by fasting, by alms, and by other effects of justice in the punishment of all failings, he will fend forth his fuccours,

wery miling occasion, they breatsudt mid

Q. Then I fee, you doubt their fincerity, who resolve to amend, but without any effect?

A. I do fo. For they cannot be fincere, who undertake a work, and leave it unfinished, because they will not take the pains necessary for carrying it on. And more reason still there is to charge it upon those, who having declared their refolutions of amendment, never more think, what they are to do, to amend. This is nothing but pretext, hypocrify and shuffling; and is the general method of this fort of purposing christians, who have some barren designs of amendment, but feldom ask the question, what way they are to take for accomplishing their defign? And if they do any thing, it is ng more proportioned to what they propose, than in time of a siege, to set children to raife works of clay against the enemy.

Q. But if persons never swear or eurse, but

when provoked, and put into a passion?

A. Do you think here, one fault excuses another? No, here is a double guilt, and both faults ought to be amended. These ought to labour, in governing their passion, who see such ill effects of it, and if they do not, they must answer for all the fins, that attend it. If these would observe, how

eafi eve inte

wh Go

Say.

fins had pro allo the

wit

is to

forufe hor

pro (o)

to

eafily they are provoked, and how upon every trifling occasion, they break forth into these scandalous expressions; they must confess the the guilt justly to belong to them, who seeing themselves going contrary to the Gospel, take so little care to amend.

Q. But if they intend nothing of what they

fay, and mean no barm sayres tot vielesen

A. Suppose it so; yet they give ill example and scandal, and the guilt of these sins ought to oblige them to reform, if they had a concern for salvation; since the woes pronounced against these, are such, as can allow no peace of conscience to subsist with the guilt of them.

Q. May not God's name be taken in vain,

without fwearing?

A. Yes, it is taken in vain, as often as it is used unprofitably, without any reference to God, or the good of our neighbour.

Q. How is this to be underflood?

A. That God's name is holy, and therefore, like all other holy things, ought to be used in a holy manner, to the service and honour of God; and as these are abused or prophaned, if they are put to any other use; so likewise the sacred name of God.

to bim? I and blow also it it besses

A. When it is used in praying, calling upon him, humbling ourselvelves before him; as likewise in all teaching and giving instructions.

Q. What then must I think of many pious christians, who upon all trivial occasions, have the name of God or Jesus in their mouths?

A. You may, without raffiness, think, that in this they know not what they do. They have an ill custom, and for want of due reflection, are scarce sensible of it.

Q. Then you are of opinion they do ill?

A. I am fo: For when I consider the infinite holine's of God, how awful he is in majesty and glory, how adorable in all that belongs to him; I apprehend here fomething of that veneration, which is due to him from all his creatures; I apprehend his name to be holy, and that it ought not to be named, but with respect. Hence turning to common conversation, and hearing how the name of God is brought in upon all occasions, idly, unprofitably, without any reason, or meaning, or fignification, I cannot but be surprised to see, what is acknowledged holy, to be brought into fo much contempt; fo as not to be fet apart as a holy thing, for holy uses; but prostituted to every thing that is fenfeless, ridiculous, or prophane; which is to equal it to the

wo join Go hoi up

bla

nor fhe or wa

the and model ho

to

ga fta prona ho

cir

wh

most inconsiderable and meanest thing in the world. If then christians of good principles join with others, who have lost all respect to God, in thus lessening the honour of God's holy name, the fault is not to be excused upon their accounts, but they must bear the blame of their fault, and be answerable for it.

Q. But if they do not think of it?

A. This betrays their fault, that they do not think of what they ought to think. It shews they do not either examine themselves, or not take care to mend, where it is wanting.

Q. They may not reflect of its being a fault, to have holy names so frequent in their mouth?

A. This is their fault still. For do not the commandments put them in mind of it, and shew them the guilt? Does not the common sense of religion, imprint in them a horror of abusing or prophaning holy things? If they should see churches turned into dancing-schools, or the Holy Altar covered for a game at cards, or a dinner, here they would start, and wait for judgments, to punish the prophanation. And do not they know the name of God, and of Jesus to be holy; so holy, that respect is due to them from the whole creation; and how then can they think it no fault, to mix these with all their

sports, and make them fill up every idle outcry or fenfeless exclamation?

Q. How are they to mend this?

A. It is a shame for pious christians to ask such a question. They prophane God's name, and in fo doing give ill example to fome, who think it fafe to follow them, and scandal to others, who are offended at the practice, and then ask what they are to do to mend. Nothing is to be left undone; let them learn to have a true zeal for God's honour; be folicitous not to offend, be watchful, where they know their failing is, and join prayer to their endeavours; and if this will not do; it is a fign they are not yet in earnest, and therefore let them try by fasting to correct that heedless humour, by which they fay more than they think of, and prejudice piety for want of better government of their tongues.

A Because we artifully so forward andging, and think the lave tufficient evi-

ride atm gaille

ice, when in really he have not. And once the goalt of a great injuffice falls upon

judg

to ju A

no I

with fo. maft tor.

but i fin?

in ju denc henc

## course or tenfeles exclamation?

## C Hid A P. of XXIV.

Of Rash Judgment, Suspicion or Jealousy.

# Q: WHEN is a person guilty of rash judg-

A. When without fufficient evidence, he judges to the prejudice of another.

Q. But if there be sufficient evidence of a person having done ill, is it then rash or sinful

to judge fo?

A. If the thing be evident, there can be no rathness in it; neither can it be a fin, within myself, to say it is so, when I see it so. If I see Judas take money to betray his master; it is not rash, to judge him a traitor. The fin, therefore, is not in judging, but in passing a rash judgment.

Q. Is there any danger of falling into this

fin?

A. Yes, very great.

Q. Whence is this danger?

A. Because we are naturally too forward in judging, and think we have sufficient evidence, when in reality we have not. And hence the guilt of a great injustice falls upon

us; that though we have almost daily experience of our mistaken judgments; yet still we are as hafty in concluding, as if we had never been deceived.

Q. Then I see you require great deliberation?

A. For a fentence to be just, the cause ought to be well examined. To do otherways is raffiness and injustice i Mala 18 10

Q. But if the thing be clear?

A. Very few things are fo: Because, as to good and evil, all actions and words depend upon many circumstances; and without the knowledge of these, we can never pretend any thing to be clear to us: Now many of these are so hidden and secret (as depending upon the inward motives and intention of the heart, and information of the understanding) that the certain knowledge of them is very difficult and rare; and how then can we judge of them?

Q. As how? and being at it onel on so tud A. A Person speaks in public what reslects upon you: You judge him malicious or your enemy: When he spoke it by accident, or meaning fomething elfe, or not thinking of its concerning you. 2. A person takes away in his box what is not his own: You judge him a thief: When, it may be, he knew nothing of it, as being laid there by another hand: Or put it up by mistake,

as this and a into a him misto a debt from overfe or fin it may judge himfel farther who i thing must i no bo confide by whi

> out the Thu daily. stances ing mo more, if we cause rather :

is no p

hazard

as thinking it his own : Or laid it only by; and afterwards forgot it. 3. A perfon goes into a house of an ill reputation : You judge him an ill man: When, it may be, he mistook the house, or went in to demand a debt, or to take away his child or relation from fuch ill company. 4. A person is overfeen in some indiscretion or folly. or fin; you judge of him by it: When, it may be, the very thing, for which you judge him, has given him fuch a dislike of himself, such a sense of the fault, that he is farther from danger of returning, than those who never had the like misfortune. 5. A thing is miffing in the house; you judge it must be one of those two, because there is no body else could take it: When, upon confideration, there are twenty feveral ways by which the thing might be missing, without their knowing any thing of it.

Thus it is in infinite accidents, that occur daily. There is so great variety of circumfances, and so great an uncertainty attending most things, that we can seldom do any more, than guess at the truth of them; and if we proceed to judge, we do rashly; because we have not a full information, but rather so very lame and imperfect, that there is no passing a judgment, but with evident hazard of doing wrong. We see these mis-

takes in our neighbours, in relation to what concerns us; how often they are deceived in the whole matter; how often they put false constructions both on our words and actions; how they judge, without knowing the principal circumstances on which the thing depends, and therefore pass very wrong judgments of us. And if we had any consideration or justice in us, this ought to make us fearful of judging others, since we must be convinced, that we may be as easily mistaken, in what concerns others, as others are in what concerns us.

Q. What then do you advise upon this subject?

A. That christians should act rationally and justly, and that is, generally suspend their judgment.

Q. How is that?

A. It is, as all persons do in a cause, which they do not fully understand: The fear of pronouncing an unjust sentence, makes them forbear giving their verdict, till things can be made clearer to them. And therefore they say; as long as things are thus in the dark and uncertain, we dare not proceed to judge, and that is suspending their judgment.

Q. How far is it then, that a christian may generally go on in this matter, without danger

of being unjust?

within they a for I appear it to be than it far, a

of do

A. suspicion other fixing there in gir preten not rais ker

Q. jealou

appear

A. reason and d But I

A. He can go no farther, than to fay within himself: Thus things feem to me: Thus they appear: There are these reasons to think so: Thus I should guess from what at present appears, &c. But I dare not conclude or judge it to be so; because things may be far otherwise, than they appear to me at present. This is as far, as generally we can go, without danger of doing wrong.

Q. Then I hope, all the thoughts that occur, prejudicial to our neighbour, are not

fins of Rash judgment?

A. No, there may many Fears arife, suspicions, jealousies, conjectures, and many other busy and working thoughts, without sixing or concluding any thing; and though there may be easily a fault in such thoughts, in giving greater liberty, than what the present occasion will justify; yet they are not rash judgments, as long as the judgment is kept in suspense, because of uncertainty appearing, and the danger of being mistaken.

Q. Do you excuse then all suspicions and

jealoufies ?

A. I commend them, when they are reasonable; they are then the effect of care and duty, and prevent many mischiefs. But I disapprove such as are unreasonable;

for these do as much mischief, as the others do good.

Q. When are they unreasonable;

A. When suspicions are raised from common ordinary occasions, such as have no particular connexion with what is suspected; and especially of persons, whose tried sidelity and virtue, sets them above all, that can be reasonably suggested from such occasions. In these cases, suspicion and jealousy are not reasonable, but being the effect of melancholy, excessive fear or humour, must be condemned, as all other passions are.

Q. Do you reckon this a sinful passion?

weakness of mind, and rather indiscretion, than sin. And yet it is the occasion of many sins, in destroying the inward peace of those, that are subject to it, making them unsit for all duties, and bringing contentions amongst others, so that there can be no long comfort under the roof, where this evil reigns.

Q. What can you advise those who are

Subject to it?

A. To be watchful in putting away all fuch thoughts, as if they were the foulest of all temptations. To stand with resolution against them, even when they seem to carry

evi fuc fuc fon ple blu To for is e thir wit lab who by evil by mu wit

mul wea able

then

tive ting one and reaf

ther

evidence with them. To be ashamed of fuch a poor spirit, as to be disturbed with fuch inconfiderable accidents. To aim at fomething more generous, than to be perplexed, and give disquiets, upon trisles. To blush at the impatience so easily moved. To be confounded at fuch excessive concern for creatures, and fo little concern for what is eternal. The ground of this must be something very immoderate, and therefore ought with tears to be lamented, and with daily labour to be opposed. Where reason is not wholly overwhelmed, it may gain fomething by perfevering endeavours; but where the evil is rooted in temper, and strengthened by a long indulgence, good endeavours must be commended, and may be blessed with a good effect; but the daily endeavour must be, to have patience under their own weakness, which they know to be unreasonable, and yet know not how to overcome.

Q. Have you nothing more to recommend to

them?

A. That all, who are subject to be positive in judging, to be too forward in suspecting, would but punctually set down for one month, how often they are mistaken; and I cannot but think, they would have reason for the suture, rather to suspect themselves, their own judgments and suspi-

cions, than any thing besides, and hence begin to think them not sit to be regarded, but rather to be put by with contempt, as impertinent trisles, or great cheats.



#### C H A P. XXV.

### Of Temptations.

Q. WHAT do you mean by temptations?

A. I mean a kind of trials, by
which a christian is exercised in this life.

Q. Are they all evil?

A. No: Some are from God; others are from the Devil.

Q. What is the difference?

A. God fends trials for the proof of our fidelity; that being found faithful, he may crown us. Thus he tried Abraham, Job, and as many martyrs, &c. as have fuffered with patience. The devil contrives temptations, that he may enfnare and overthrow us, as he did Eve, Sampson, David, Solomon, &c.

Q. Are the temptations of the devil always

fins ?

A. They

il

th

Soi

m

of

gu

fu

the

fer

the

fin

bu

ing

be ter'

A. They are always the effects of the devil's malice; but they are never our fins, except we make them so by our own will.

2. How do we make them our fins?

A. Principally by approving them, being pleased with them, or giving our consent to them.

2. As how for example?

A. If thoughts of anger or revenge come into my mind, and I, upon observing them, am either pleased with the thoughts of being revenged, or approve and willingly entertain them, or give my confent to them, and refolue to put them in execution: Then I make all fuch thoughts my own, by the act of my own will, and must answer for the guilt of wilful fin.

2. But if you dot approve or entertain such thoughts in your mind?

A. If I do not approve or entertain such thoughts in my mind, but, upon the first obferving them, earnestly endeavour to put them away from me; then they are not my fins; my will having no other part in them, but in fighting against them.

Q. In this then there can be no offence?

A. So far from offence, that it is performing an acceptable service; such as it would be in a fervant, driving away from his mafter's door, a person whom he perceived to

Vol. XII.

have an ill design upon the house. For as in so doing he shews himself faithful in his master's business; so a Christian, by resisting sinful thoughts, and endeavouring to put them away, gives proof of his sidelity, and shews himself firm in maintaining the cause of virtue against its enemies.

. Q. But if fuch finful thoughts, thus put

away, return again, and again?

A. If they should return every hour in the day, and so often be resisted; if they should continue, making their assaults upon a Christian whole hours, days, or weeks, and he continue still upon his defence, and making resistance, he cannot be charged with the guilt of them; but must be commended for his sidelity and constancy, in not yielding to a troublesome enemy, but amidst all the solicitations still abiding true to the interest and cause of his Lord.

2. Must it not be a great trouble to a pi-

ous foul to be thus perplexed?

A. It ought not to be so; because this can be no prejudice to him, as long as he continues faithful; rather he ought to rejoice in the exercise of his duty, in doing what is acceptable to God, and giving proofs of his resolution, in the cause of virtue. Is a soldier or good subject troubled, at the frequent opportunities he has of shewing his

go If oc fro

in ing tur tro

of ple

difc

Ch

denderien fin; pun

the from

loyalty to his prince, on whose favour and good opinion he depends for his preferment? If then a Christian be disquieted on the like occasions, it is to be feared this proceeds from self-love and impatience.

2. How fo?

A. Because in spiritual affairs, as well as in temporal, there is a natural desire of going on peaceably, quietly, and without disturbance; and when it cannot do so, it is troubled at what is thus contrary to inclination. Now this trouble is the effect of self-love and of a want of patience.

Q. What motives can you give for a Christian's having patience amidst the trou-

ble of temptations?

A. First, Because this life is not a state of peace, but of trials and war; and it must be a duty to submit to the condition of it: And to be impatient at it, must be great indiscretion.

2. Because such is the order of Providence, that man, being not wholly delivered from the empire of the devil, should experience this subjection in punishment of his sin; and not to submit to the trouble of this punishment, is impatience.

3. Because by temptations a Christian has the greater sense of his own weakness, and from hence may lay the foundation of a lasting humility, and stand against all the dandevile and wet read was the

gers of pride.

4. Because by temptations, being fensible of the continual dangers in which he is, and feeing that he has no help in himfelf; he is convinced of his entire dependence on God, and of the necessity of seeking help from him.

5. Because by resisting temptations, he may improve in virtue: It being the method of common discretion to keep a stricter guard; and fortify with greater strength, where they observe the greater danger.

Upon these and fuch like motives, the Christian, while he has an abhorrence of fin, may find it reasonable and even a duty to fubmit to the trouble of temptations; and instead of being dejected, have patience under this trouble, with hopes of receiving benefit by it.

Q. But if the temptations are such as carry horror and abomination with them, can you then wonder if a foul be troubled?

A. I do not wonder at it; and yet it ought not to be fo: For the most abominable of all temptations are no more fins than any others, if the foul gives them no admittance, but has an abhorrence of them. What more horrid temptations than those with which the devil affaulted Christ in the

ap to th

dil no ten min

hov

mal

F pro yiel and of a

trou cove upon fion the e diflik

defert, of falling down and worshipping the devil, and yet this was no way injurious to the infinite sanctity of our Redeemer? This ought to be a comfort to all Christians, when the devil, in this frightful manner, shews his malice against them.

2. The trouble must arise from the great apprehension and fear they have of yielding to such thoughts; and how shall they know

they do not confent or yield to them?

A. Christians of composed minds easily discern this, in the opposition made against them, and in the dislike of them. But it is not so easy for others who are of a frightful temper, because the disturbance of their minds causes confusion and darkness. But however they may from these observations make a judgment of what passes within them.

First, If they were affrighted at any evil proposed, it is a good argument of their not yielding to it or approving it: Because fear and disturbance is a sign of dislike and not

of approbation.

2. If upon any evil proposed, they find a trouble seizing on them, and that, upon recovering their thoughts, they have a weight upon their spirits: This trouble and oppression are good signs of not having approved the evil; because trouble is an argument of dislike and not of approbation.

Let then they perceive this fear and trouble, they are to judge, that they yielded not to the evil proposed: But what if they still fear the contrary?

A. Such fears are not to be regarded: Nothing is more deceitful than immoderate fears; these corrupt the judgment, blind the understanding, confound the reason, perplex the mind; and to judge by these, is as abfurd, as to choose a mist for discerning more clearly distant objects. Such fears then ought to be deposed; and the judgment is to be framed from such hints, marks, or observations, as are a more certain indication of the truth: And on these it may depend with considence, and with peace of conscience, even while fears are endeavouring to put it on the rack.

#### CHAP. XXV.

Upon the Same Subject of Temptations.

Q. YOU have discouraged fearful Christians from having regard to their fears: But, what if they are fully convinced, of wilfully yielding to sinful thoughts?

A. Their fears may deceive them in this. For tell me in another case; if you should fee a person, upon seeing his house on fire, furprised with sudden fear, fall down in defpair, and cry out, I am burnt, I am burnt, when the fire is yet at a distance; would not you judge fuch fear too hafty in despairing, and that it concludes all gone, when there is no harm done? It is many times fo in Christians disquieted with excessive fears; their apprehension of sin is so great, and the working of their imagination fo strong, that they conclude the very fight of fin to be their confent to it; when, at the same time, they have a dread upon their fouls, which shews the evil proposed not to be their choice, but their aversion. Hence concluding too hastily by their fears, they think they have finned, when they have not, and are under the rack of conscience, without the guilt of fin.

Q. Do you judge thus of all Christians?

A. No; but only of fuch as are immoderately fearful and scrupulous, and whose known piety shews them to be persons, whose great care and solicitude is to avoid sin. These are under a distemper of mind; their fear is excessive, and even raises many of those imaginations, which are their rack; as it is in all fearful persons, who faney many frightful things before them, which others see not, or know to be nothing; and till they can moderate their fears, are not likely to have relief: Hence compassion is due to them; and this favourable construction is not favour, but justice due to their case.

th

ar

01

de

th

ag

de

VC

2. What then would you have these do?

A. Be punctual in following direction, fearful and scrupulous in departing from it; this fear would be better placed, and help to cure the other. I would have them learn to despise shadows, and not to be asraid of them; for the worst of temptations are no more than shadows to souls that have an aversion for them; if they could come once to laugh at the devil's malice, and pass by all his suggestions with as little concern as if they did not see them, they would soon find the comfort of it in an interior peace, and in a great freedom of spirit, not subject to the disquiets of vain terrors and a weak imagination.

Q. But as to other Christians?

A. Others are to examine the whole proceeding and several steps of their thoughts, upon the suggestion of any evil:

First, Whether they made reflection upon

it, as foon as they could, and endeavoured to remove it.

Or whether, upon an imperfect reflection, there was fome neglect, in not prefently awakening the foul, and making a speedy

opposition against it.

Or, whether upon an imperfect reflection, the foul lingered under the feizure of some delight, as seemingly unresolved whether it should rise up and make resistance against the evil, or embrace the satisfaction of it.

- 2. Whether, upon a perfect reflection upon the evil proposed, they presently and earnestly endeavoured to defend themselves against it; or, instead of this, lingered under the thought, without using such endeavours.
- 3. Whether they willingly opened their heart to the evil, gave it admittance, entertained it and took fatisfaction in it.

4. Whether they had a deliberate defire of accomplishing the evil proposed.

5. Whether they positively resolved upon

accomplishing it.

6. How long time they continued willingly entertaining such evil thoughts, desires, or resolutions.

By these particulars, other Christians are generally to examine themselves, and accordingly, as they discover their fault, so to be careful in repenting of it.

And can there be a fin then in evil thoughts, before a Christian perfectly re-

flects upon them?

A. If a Christian observes, that finful thoughts possess his mind, and that he is bufy in them, for fome time before he fully reflects upon them, he cannot but conclude himself under some indisposition; since if his foul were truly possessed with a sense of its duty, and a just fear of offending, it would be certainly more watchful, so as even to flart at the first appearance of the evil. Thus the first fight of what we truly dread, feizes us with fear: And, therefore, if we can converse for some time with what is finful: If we have various thoughts and difcourfes within ourselves upon it, and are so far from being affrighted, that we feem to take no notice of it, there is just ground to fear, that we have not that true fear of fin, as we ought to have, but are rather indifferent than averse to it. And it may be, that what we generally call not reflecting, may be a finful neglect, the effect of a finful tepidity and want of care in not putting our fouls in better order. and it a small a halfsgout

our fault, if we do not willingly entertain

Ы

pr

on

them?

A. Yes, if we have given any wilful or finful occasion to them; for thus the danger is of our own creating, and we must be charged with it. And therefore, if Christians, by idle conversation, discoursing, or reading, have their minds afterwards busied in idle amusements, it is not to be questioned, but they must own these to be their sin, although they then give no wilful admittance to them. We are not to be answerable for temptations, that are not of our own seeking; but it is otherwise, if we, without necessity, put ourselves into temptation.

Q. What ways are there for a Christian

to put away evil thoughts?

A. There are many: As, first, to turn immediately his thoughts to God in prayer, earnestly petitioning to be delivered or protected against all evil.

2. To run, in spirit, to Christ crucified, and take shelter in his sacred wounds, with

an entire confidence in him.

3. To prostrate to the ground, in an humble distrust of himself, and claiming the promises of God made to those who call upon him in their distress.

4. To make protestation against the evil

fuggested, whatever it be. To be 19119 April

5. To take a good book and read, and above all the word of God, which is the

fword of the spirit, to which the apostle advifes, as most powerful for overcoming the enemy.

6. To refift the devil with courage; fo St James prescribes, " Resist the devil, and

he will flee from you."

7. To apply his thoughts to business, to

0

b

W

ly

ti

th

m

to

CO

lea

lif

tei

fre

m

be

discourse of indifferent matters.

8. To take no notice of them, but pass them by, as if not feen; and this with a quiet and undiffurbed mind: As knowing that their presenting themselves before him is no fin, as long as he regards them not.

Some fervants of God have with these practifed other rigorous expedients, endeavouring to repel force by force. But however these here set down are the more general helps, and Christians making use of them with a fincere and humble heart, will find benefit in them. The last being most proper against such thoughts as have any horror or foolishness in them.

Q. Is there any other remedy you can

prescribe?

A. The most certain is that of a holy life, employed in feeking and ferving God, in declining the occasions of fin, in withdrawing from the common dangers of the world, in avoiding idleness and unprofitable converfation, in daily endeavouring to improve in virtue, and doing good to all, accompanied with the exercises of many self-denials, proper for bringing the will into fubjection, and overcoming nature and the world. Such a life is the best security; for though it be not exempt from temptations, yet God is faithful, and will not fuffer fuch Christians to be tempted above their strength, but all will turn to their greater good. Now as this is the best remedy, so a common worldly life is that which leads into all temptations; daily feeking them, delighting in them, studying to increase them, and scarce making any expence but what is favourable to these. Such Christians cannot without confusion put up this petition to God, " And lead us not into temptation;" their whole life being a course of voluntary and studied temptations; and how then can they be free from fin, fince they go into it, and in a manner renounce that help which alone can be their protection.

one who which may is the college at

escentistic de canona i i par un varida por esta con un de con esta con un avoidante de contra d

ray eyessi sering saa adagaa daa ee dheey



ACCUMENT TO

#### CHAP. XXVII.

### Of Solicitude in Temporal Concerns.

2. TXTHAT do you mean by a folicitous mind?

A. I mean a spirit bent, with an immoderate folicitude, upon the concerns of this world, not as to any thing directly finful, nor yet as pressed to it by necessity.

Q.- What is the evil of fuch a spirit?

A. The evil of it is, that where there is fuch a folicitude, there is

1. A want of faith in the providence of

2. A want of confidence in the goodness of God.

3. A want of fubmission to his orders and appointments. Then as to the evil effects of it, these are without end or meafure.

1. By it the foul is kept under a contithe mining on wa

PU

ga

nual disquiet.

2. It has no fense of gratitude for whatever bleffings it receives, through the folicitude of what it feems to want.

3. It is not capable of performing any

one spiritual duty as it ought to be, being distracted with unreasonable disquiets.

4. It is so straitened, that it dares not perform the half part of those charities of

which it is capable.

5. It is so taken up with itself, that it has little compassion for others, and often gives seandal through the hardness of heart.

6. It has so great a concern for this life, that the other is generally neglected, and

almost left to chance.

7. It is so eager for present advantages, that it is often in very great danger of doing injustice for interest sake, though still disguised with some plausible cover; and many times falls under the guilt of oppression, and doing what is very mean and unreasonable.

These are some of the ill effects of immoderate solicitude, such as ought to make Christians asraid of it, and resolute in the endeavours of mastering whatever degree of

it they can discover in themselves.

2. You do not in this, I hope, discourage Christians from being careful in their

worldly duties?

A. No, by no means; to be careful, punctual, diligent, and faithful in the obligations of every state, is so far from being a fault, that it is the duty of every Christian, whatever his condition be; and to be want-

ing in them, is not only a failing, but may easily come to be sinful, and even very sinful in the consequences of such a neglect.

2. Then you approve diligence and in-

duftry, but discommend solicitude?

A. I do so: And this I have learnt from the Gospel, which recommending sidelity and care to Christians, forbids them to be solicitous: Nolite soliciti ese: "Be not solicitous," Matt. vi. 25. And this is pressed by Christ to his followers, in that chapter, by so many arguments, that, it may be, there is not one point of the Gospel enforced with more.

W

to

the

Ga

wh

fer

der

due

Q. What is the difference between chris-

tian care and folicitude?

A. The difference, many times, appears not outwardly, because both alike oblige men to industry and labour; but still there is a great difference in the spirit interiorly moving.

1. Solicitude places its confidence too much, if not all, in human industry: But christian care trusts in the blessing God

gives to its endeavours.

2. Solicitude is for going on and thriving at any rate, without due regard to justice and right: But christian care desires no other success, but as agreeable to the will and law of God.

3. Solicitude is taken up with temporal concern: But christian care reserves time, for duly satisfying its obligations to God.

4. Solicitude thinks all lost, when human means fail, and absolutely despairs: But christian care still retains a hope in God, because though such means fail, yet God does not: And therefore, when solicitude is in despair, this enjoys a certain peace in God, whose power and goodness are still the same, whatever be the miscarriage of its own labours.

Q. The difference is plain: But describe to me now, in what disposition of mind a Christian should undertake and manage whatever concerns he has of this life?

A. A Christian, in whatever state he be, has obligations and business belonging to his state, whether bound or free. Now as to all these:

1. The Christian ought to undertake them in obedience to the will of God; because being in this state, it is the will of God he should satisfy the duties of it.

2. He ought to be careful and faithful in what he does; because he is performing the service or duties which the order of Providence has laid upon him, and fidelity is due to such orders

3. He is not to confide in his own la-

bours or industry, but in the power, goodness, and blessing of God: Because whatever natural means are used, the effect is not to be attributed to them, but to God; and he is as much to be acknowledged the author, as if it had been wrought by miracle, without the concurrence of any thing created. For all is from God.

4. Hence he is to perform all with a peaceable dependence on God. Confessing him to know what is best, and therefore, with interior quiet, waiting for the manifestation of his will in whatever shall happen.

to acknowledge it from God, and beg grace that he may make a good use of his blessing. But if he be disappointed, if he meets with dissiculties or troubles, if he sees nothing but missortune before him, and a total miscarriage as to whatever he proposed; yet still he is to have comfort and hope; he is to have comfort, in having done his duty, in having omitted nothing on his part, in being in the hands of God, who knows and orders what is best; and in his infinite goodness is he to rest with hope, who has infinite ways of helping, even while all seems in despair.

In this manner the good Christian undertakes his duty piously, performs it faithC

b

fu

T

th

m lif fully, depends on God entirely, waits for the determination of his will peaceably, and rests in it with comfort, whatever it be.

2. But if a person's temper be such, that he knows not how to banish this solicitude

from his breaft?

d

te

as all

> rh

A. He must labour the more earnestly against it. I would have him every day

look at his distemper.

First, See how unreasonable it is; since whatever his solicitude be, he cannot effect any thing by it, any more than he can add to his stature, by being thoughtful upon it. Solicitude disquiets, breeds uneasiness, disables the mind, consumes the spirit, renders a person incapable of performing what otherwise he might have done, and provoking God's displeasure, shuts out his blessing from us: And can it be allowable in a Christian to tolerate in himself such an evil?

2. Let him see how unchristian it is, to have so great a concern for things that must perish; to be so much troubled about what is in itself so very inconsiderable; to lose all comfort and peace upon such trisles. What becomes of eternity, when the soul is consuming itself upon what ought to be despised? This is certainly not a christian temper, and therefore ought not to be tolerated: So much concern for ordinary things of this life, and so little for the next!

tight be his trouble, there is nothing more out of order than himself; and that to amend this, ought to be his first care. For what will it avail him, if all things were

right, and he himself not so?

Such considerations, daily and seriously meditated, might be some help in moderating solicitude; and if they are not presently effectual, yet ought the Christian to persevere in his good endeavours. The evil, of itself, is dangerous, and of very ill consequence; and being rooted in constitution, or confirmed by custom, is not easily overcome; he must not, therefore, either be dejected or tired, when the case is such, that not to overcome, is to put eternity to the hazard.



no ef

for

up

bu

#### CHAP. XXVIII.

### Of a Worldly Spirit.

2. WHAT do you mean by a worldly spirit?

A. I mean fuch a spirit as finds no satisfaction but in the common ways of the

world, is pleased with all that is light and vain, studies divertisements, loves idle or unprofitable conversation, is fond of gaming, observes no discipline, indulges appetite and sleep, is not apprehensive of danger, is prodigal in its expences, delights to be in public, courts applause, keeps up a form of religion, but practises none.

2. And what judgment do you make

now of fuch Christians?

A. I think they are in a very dangerous way; and that if they are not already under the guilt of great fins, they are, at least, hastening to this misfortune.

2. How fo?

A. Because they live in the midst of dangers and temptations; they are pleased and delighted with them, and even seek them. Now those, who know how great is the weakness of nature, know likewise it cannot long subsist amidst such circumstances, especially where there is so very little reason to expect the grace of God for their security.

2. Such Christians may have an abhorrence of all crimes; and may not they, upon this, hope for God's grace to support

them?

A. They may have a kind of abhorrence; but how can this be fincere, when they

converse so familiarly, and take such delight in the occasions of sin? Such an abhorrence is not to be trusted; and if well examined, it is to be feared a manifold guilt might be found confisting with it, while there is a horror of the scandalous part. The soul may lie under the guilt of very great fins before God, even while it appears innocent to the eyes of men.

2. Then you cannot depend upon the good opinion which they have of them-

felves?

A. I cannot; they are too partial to be trusted. They love themselves and the world fo well, and have fo great an interest in it, that they judge more by inclination than equity. Their judgments are corrupted by the pernicious maxims of those with whom they converfe, who frame principles in defence of their liberties, and by their raileries bring the ways of the Gospel into difesteem. They study nothing of the Gospel, nor take any pains to enquire what are the rules of a christian life; and how then are they qualified for making a true judgment, Whether they live up to them, or transgress them? Can those be fit to judge of trespasses, who know not the law?

Q. If they know not themselves, and see not their own faults, pray, do you tell me

where they are wanting in their duty?

m for ete

tho

cor all bei in and

not

the

Chri first the 1

in th

A. I think they are under a manifold

guilt :

1. In loving the world so much, when the Gospel declares to them, that "Whoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God," James iv. 4. If the Gospel be the law to Christians, they live in sin who follow it not.

2. In being very unjust, whilst having the concern of a temporal and eternal life before them, they are so much more solicitous for what must soon perish, than for what is of an everlasting duration; and make it their study how to please themselves for a moment, while the business of being eternally happy, scarce ever enters into their thoughts.

3. In breaking the greatest of all the commandments, in not loving God above all things, and with all their hearts. It being certain that the love of God is not in their hearts, who make it their daily and whole business to please themselves, and not God; to do their own wills, and not

the will of God.

0

**f**-

re

en

gor ge

ee

ne

4. In breaking another command of Christ, in which he thus enjoins; "Seek first the kingdom of God." Now to seek the kingdom of God first, being to seek it in the first place, above all things, and be-

fore all things; with the greatest care and concern, with the most serious and persevering endeavours, with the greatest labour and courage, so as rather to chuse to lose all things than heaven: How do these obferve this command, who bend their whole thoughts to this world; have their care, concern, and folicitude confined to it, and fcarce think more of the other than of a thing not worth their care, and which may

therefore take its chance.

5. In abufing and perverting all the bleffings of God, by living an idle and unprofitable life. Justice requires, that whatever comes from the hand of God, should be employed according to his will, to his fervice, and honour. And Christ has manifested his will, that all are to give an account of their stewardship, and of whatever talents they have received. Now how can they do this, who instead of employing what they have to God's honour, make a daily facrifice of it to felf-love and the world, to their fenses and appetite, to ambition and pleasure; and do as much serve and worship these, as ever any Heathen did his idols? Can these fay, they render to God the things that are God's? Can these pretend to ferve God with what they have? Can these fay, they lay up treasures in heaven, or

bring

th

ha

W

liv

bring forth fruit to life everlasting? Let them speak truth, and they must confess, that they are barren trees, and being found without fruit, can expect no other sate, but to be cut down and cast into the sire.

6. In neglecting the ways of falvation, and taking no care to follow the rules of the Gospel. Not endeavouring to be humble and meek, and poor of spirit; nor to overcome the world and crucify the flesh, nor to live according to the spirit, &c. Now these being rules given by Christ to his followers, as many as believe in his name, are bound to observe them, because this is their profession; and to make this no part of their care, is to be falle to what they profess, it is, in fact, to renounce their faith, and to declare that either they do not believe Christ, who prescribes these rules, or that they have no concern for that heaven, which he promifes to the observers of them.

In these, and many other particulars, christians of this worldly spirit seem daily to offend; so that while they seem innocent to themselves, I cannot but lament their unhappy state and think them to be out of the way of the Gospel and of all its promises.

ts

do

ey

ri-

to

nd

hip

ls?

the

to

ese

or

ing

Q. What then would you advise them to do?

A. To change the whole method of their lives. This may be a hard faying; but Vol. XII.

what less can they do, who are altogether out of the way? Observe the particulars:

First, let them think of a proper person, by whose skilful charity they may be directed, and on whose prudence they may conside. And if they will be resolute, in following the advice of such an one, they will soon find a good effect of their endeavours.

2. Let them break off from their usual

company, and choose better.

3. Let them endeavour to be fomething regular in observing hours and discipline.

4. Let them daily, at appointed times, read and study such books, as may inform them of the truth of this world and the next; and teach them to esteem every thing, according to its real worth.

5. Let them be constant in prayer; and every day spend half on hour by themselves, walking or otherwise, to consider their past ill management, that nothing is worth their care, but heaven, and what they are to do

to gain it.

6. Let them frequently confer with their director, and be fincere in their communication with him. Let them call themselves to an account of their life past, and having, by a true conversion and hearty repentance, made their peace with God, let them begin a new life, neither discouraged with rising

difficulties, nor regarding what the world

fays.

a-

to

g, e,

a

ng

By fuch endeavours, there may be great hopes of amendment, and without them, I cannot but fear all will be loft. But then those that undertake it, must remember, not to be easily tired, because the work they have to do, is great, being the change of the whole man, and great works are not to be performed, but by patient labour and perfeverance in it, so to oblige God to their assistance, without whom nothing can be done.

read and thuly tach hooks, as man inform them of the route of this world and the bear and teach them to effect every thing.

For confunction the stand worth. The prayer of pactors of the stand of the confunction prayer of the confunction by themselves, walking or a standard standard their pails

the management, and anthing is worth their care, but haven and what they are to do

to gain we there there in their content with their community and their community are their community are them call themselves to an account of their life paft, and having by a time content on their back their pract, with beauty repentance made their pract, with God, let their begin

well Her nearly three with time



# here then xixx lk.q a A pH o hand to he had to the produce of

# The contract of the contract o

WHAT do you mean by tepidity? Is it a want of fervour at prayers?

A. The best may, upon some occasion find a want of their fervour at prayers, and yet are not to be esteemed tepid or lukewarm christians. Nay, They may be performing an acceptable devotion, even while they feel a want of it, if, under that want, they labour to raise their spirits to God, and with courage go on, patiently bearing the trouble of their present darkness. The same may happen to good christians, in frequenting the Holy Communion; they may fometimes approach to the Holy Table, without comfort, and without any feeling of fensible devotion; and yet this may be the effect, not of tepidity, but of an unsearchable providence, which distributes bleffings not by our meafures; and even then fecretly works in fouls, giving great bleffings, when it denies the redement threatened to themshortened refino

Q. What then do you mean by tepidity?

A. I mean a certain indifferency of spirit, which does not wholly lay aside the duties of religion, but will not take the pains to perform them well. Hence a person subject to this evil, may be seen in the practice of christian exercises, but yet goes about them in such a manner, as if it were no concern to him, whether they were done or no; and is so little solicitous to do them well, that he seems to think it not worth his labour to take pains in them.

Hence, First, such an one says his prayers, without any inward sense of what he is doing; but with a mind carried away with all occurring thoughts; and outwardly behaves himself in such an undecent manner, that either his slothful lolling, or giddy gazing discover his mind not to be concerned in God. And how easily does he quite omit this duty, while sleep and sloth and every accident takes

place of itehol want youth I norming mo by

but seldom, as being not solicitous for that interior benefit and help, which is to be obtained by them; but if custom, or the satisfaction of others prevails with him, it is done with so much indifferency and little labour, that he has more reason to fear the judgment threatened to the unworthy, than

expect the bleffing promifed to fuch, as ap-

proach in a better manner.

3. If he observes himself subject to failings, he may think of reforming, and fometimes undertake it; but his refolulations are foon defeated, he is discouraged with the first difficulties, and rather chooses to go on the old way, than undergo the trouble of amendment. The sea of the manual wide time

4. If he purposes to take a view of himfelf, it is done with fuch an imperfect glance, that he is a stranger to himself, and lies under a manifold guilt, which is pointed at by his neighbours, and made the matter of their wonder, while it is not at all discerned by him. dr and modernion as the should

5. Company is a general fnare to him; fo that though he foresees the inconvenience, and has a fense of his own weakness, in being too eafily imposed on; yet he has not resolution to disengage himself, nor courage enough for duty, but rather tamely yields; being too lazy to be fingly good.

6. He cannot bear good discipline; and therefore feldom observes order, and is always uncertain in whatever he purpofes or undertakes: Whence nothing goes on thrivingly either of this world or the next.

He avoids those, whose charity makes them defirous of his amendment. Good books have no relish in them, idle divertisements and unprofitable conversation are all a if he observes hundel he rolmos sid

8. He knows not what to do at home,

and abroad he is a vagabond. Done some

By these characters you may perceive, what is meant by a tepid christian, and fee a difference between his unhappiness and those others of better principles, who many times experience a great barrenness in their fouls. For though in effect, they feem alike, being both without fense of duty or of God; yet they are very different in the cause, whilst sloth and wilful negligence is the fault in the one, and the other labours like a good christian, though he be deprived of the comfort of his endeathe that showed he torches the menuterstuck

Q. But where lies the great fault of the tepid christian? : no belegan, ville conque?

A. First, that he has not an active faith of God, nor a due apprehension of his Infinite Majesty, nor a fear of his justice, nor a fense of his dependence on him; and hence he is no more folicitous to ferve him, than if he were "a dumb idol, neither capable to reward or punish. seekerahun

2. That he is not fenfible of eternity, and has no more concern for fecuring future happinels, than if it were a dream. modi-

3. That hence he lives under the guilt of a great folly, in not having a due value for God and the eternal well-being of his foul: And under a great injustice, in not, giving God his due, nor ferving him with

fidelity, nor providing for his foul.

4. That he is guilty of another folly, in pretending to heaven, and not confidering, what is necessary for obtaining it. So that while the Gospel prescribes a watchful, laborious and penitential life; while it requires felf-denial, and forfaking the world, and crucifying the flesh, abounding in every good work, working out our falvation with fear and trembling, not to be weary in well doing, to prove what is acceptable to the Lord, to walk circumspectly, tounderstand what is the will of God, to redeem the time, to put on the whole arm mour of God, to walk worthy of our vocation, to prefent our bodies a living facrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, and not to be conformed to this world, but to prove, what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; while the Gospel, I fay, requires christians to perform these and many other fuch duties, as conditions for obtaining the eternal inheritance; the tepid christian goes on his own lazy way, without any folicitude of doing what is enjoyned

nd not regarding the terms, hopes to partake of the promises. And what is this less, than the folly of him, who proposing a journey of great concern, should either sit still at home, or lie down in the way, and yet hope to arrive safe at the place desired?

Q. If this be the condition of Luke warm christians, what can you advise them for their

amendment?"

A. I would advise them to study the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and there observe; what was the life of Jesus, and what is prescribed to his followers. If they can find there encouragement for their sloth and indifference, and promises of Heaven to those, who labour not for it, I have nothing to except against them; but if it be there evident, that they are negligent in the conditions prescribed, and that the method of their life is not according to the Gospel; then let them conclude, that something more is to be done, see in particular what it is, and that they are not in way of salvation, till they in earnest endeavour to walk in the ways of the Gospel.

2. This ought to be the fubject of their most ferious thoughts for half an hour, every day, either walking or kneeling.

3. A pious person ought to be made choice of, whose experience may direct them in this work.

H v

4. Some points ought to be confidered every day, proper for quickening in them fome new life: As, first, the infinite love of God and his defire of our falvation. 2. The laborious method undertaken by Christ for our redemption. 3. The life of Christ and his Apostles; how much they laboured and fuffered, for gaining the crown. 4. The retirement, aufterities, and rigorous discipline practised by primitive christians and other fervants of God, for working out their falvation. 5. What labours men undergo for worldly interest or preferment. 6. How fond they are of ease and quiet; how unwilling to be disturbed, how averse to trouble. What pains ought they then to take, for making provision for eternal rest. and being delivered from endless disquiets, from racks, and univerfal mifery everlasting.

If this method were undertaken in some convenient retirement, and usual conversation broken off with violence; the sincerity of the undertaking (carried on with patience, courage, and perseverance) would be very powerful with God, for obtaining his assistance, and be a means for gaining new

Q. In richas meaner on to a ohi man

be delivered from them

life to the foul net life odw stree voice

# Same points ought to be confidered every day, proper for quickening in them fome new XXX As A first a tH in inte love of God and his define of our salvanous

of Prayer oil redemption. 3. The life of

Q. W HY is prayer necessary?

pointed by God, for obtaining his grace for the relief, of all our necessities. AR, and it shall be given you," Luke xi. 9.

A. "They are fo great and universal, that we are not able to do any thing of ourfelves, not fo much, as to think a good thought," 2 Cor. iii. 5. Joh. xv. 5. So that being under the obligation of many great duties, both as to doing good, and avoiding evil, we are not of ourselves capable of performing any the least part of them, but our fufficiency is of God. her memeriner hasinevines

O. By prayer then we are to feek remedy of all our complaints?

A. God has fo ordained it; whence fuch, as neglect this exercise, neglect their falvation, and cannot wonder, if they lie under many evils, who will not use the means to be delivered from them.

Q. In what manner ought a christian to pray?

A. Not by faying over prayers only or repeating words; for all this may be no more than lip-lervice, of which God has declared his abhorrence. Nor yet by a dry and barren speculation of divine mysteries; but by raifing up the heart to God. Prayer therefore is the cry of the heart to God, fensible of its great mifery, and earnestly desirous to be delivered from it. And this being the effect of the Divine Spirit, it must be by this Spirit all are to be taught to pray.

Then ought not all to alk for this before

A. This ought to be their first prayer, and is the best preparation for all that follows-Prayer is an exercise of great concern, and of as great difficulty; and to undertake it, without thus invoking the affiftance of the Holy Spirit, is rashness, presumption and tempting God. responded your stand

Q. In what manner may a christian ask the

belp of the Holy Spirit?

A. By first confessing himself incapable of performing this exercise, and then beseeching the Holy Spirit to move, raife, and inflame his heart, to preferve in his mind a true fense of his misery, and form in him the defires of a better state find still svan will a

Q. If prayer be the cry of the heart to God, bow many forts of prayers are there?

the eri tio fig the ma eft

em ger its the and

ing fam for fho the waf con gall

at thei

An As many forts, as there are ways of the heart, fending forth or expressing these eries to heaven: Whether it be in the motions of the heart only, or in words, or in fighs or tears. So that in whatever manner the heart be raifed to God, in whatever manner it expresses its desires, it is to be esteemed prayer.

Q. If this be prayer, may not then a person

pray at all times, and in all business?

A. He may fo: For whatever be the employment of the hands, the heart is generally at liberty; and if this, fenfible of its manifold mifery, cries to God for help, it then prays: This may be done at all times, and thus may St. Paul's advice be observed, " Pray without ceafing," I Theff. v. 17.

Q. Then none can pretend an excuse for

not praying 2 long . sloudit

A. There may be hinderances from joining or meeting with others in public or family-prayers; but these can be no excuse for not praying; because those, who are in shops, in the kitchen, in the streets, or in the field; those who are at the anvil, the wash-bole, or the wheel; those who are confined by fickness, by chains, or in the gallies, have still their hearts and thoughts at liberty; with these they may represent their miseries to God, may complain to him. of their unhappiness, send up their defires to him, and importune his mercy for their relief, Let them but consider, when they have any project in their head, when they are bent with earnestness upon any design, when their hearts are passionately engaged to any object; how no fort of business, in such cases, ties up their thoughts, but these are still at liberty; with these they muse, contrive, and resolve, wherever they are, and whatever employment busies their hands: Let them consider this, and they will soon find it very practicable, to pray at all times; and that they deceive themselves, in pretending to have just excuses for not praying.

t

C

ai

pa

kn

00

ang

cha

odo

THE

it i

Wan

1 M

beha the

one

ing

that

God

Q. Then you do not require any decency in faying of prayers, who thus fuit them with

all times, places, and bufinefs? as it says it

A. Yes, there is still a decency to be obferved in prayer, especially when it is solemn
or public. For though God will ever have
regard to a heart raised to him, whatever
business may otherwise employ the hands;
or whatever the posture be, whether walking,
sitting, or lying down; yet still when a
christian has time and opportunity for wholly
applying himself to God in prayer, which
I call here Solemn prayer, it is certain this
ought to be performed with respect and
decency.

191 Qb Why for thirat shaniggedatel rieds toi

A. Because any action solemnly performed to God, as a part of his worship, ought to be performed in a manner becoming him. Holy things ought to be done in a holy manner.

in QarAs bow trop on work, sign to vak og

A. In faying prayers upon the knees; because custom has so made it, (besides other authority) that this is a respectful way of paying our homage to God and offering our petitions to him.

Q. What think you of leaning, lolling, or

kneeling on one knee?

A. If weakness or any infirmity be the occasion of it, it is not to be reproved; and God who sees the necessity, will never charge it as disrespect.

Qd But as to others?

A. In others it must be a fault; because it is not becoming God, and discovers a want of respect.

Q. How fo? and a wanter white policy

A. Because in many cases, the outward behaviour or posture of the body discovers the inward disposition of the mind. When one is gazing about at his prayers, and turning to every thing that passes, it is plain that the mind of such a one, is not fixed on God. And it is as plain, when a person

behaves himself undecently in the presence of God, that such an one has neither a due fense of God, as to love, fear, or adoration, nor of his own misery, and of the dependence he has on God, for its remedy. And do you think then, there is not a fault in praying in an irreverent manner?

nı

th

da

it :

no

Bu

tan

mu

the

dlin

goo

fhou

of re

of z

to b

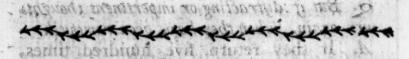
Q. If this be true, who can deny it?

A. Observe but how the laziness, dulness and carelessness of the body, betray the like ill qualities in the foul, and then you will concur with me; that, faying prayers in a lazy, flothful manner, speaks plainly the in-disposition of the mind. When a christian has a lively apprehension of God's infinite Majesty, this sense of the mind affects the body, and it appears in certain visible marks, the effects and arguments of the inward reverence: It is the same, as to the other part; outward irreverence is the effect of that, which is within; and a person, that behaves himfelf difrespectfully towards God, shews that his heart is not possessed with a due respect to him, wherefore without any reflection upon fuch as are fickly, weak, or under any indisposition, I desire all others to observe themselves, and never to excuse it from a fault, if floth, carelessness, or irreverence appear in the posture of faying their prayers.

Q. What is your opinion of those who seem to think, all holiness consists, in saying a great number of prayers; and for the solicitude of saying their whole task, huddle all over without attention or reverence?

A. It is certainly good to have a time for daily prayer, and likewife a task to be duly performed; for this is good discipline, and it must be a commendable piety in christians, not to permit this time of prayer to be taken out of their hands by ordinary accidents. But still they must remember, their acceptance with God, depends not on the length or number of their prayers, but upon their faying them well; and therefore, that it is much better to fay a few prayers with attention, than to huddle over a great many, with the folicitude of finishing a task. This huddling way then is not good; neither is it good to let idleness, gossipping, unnecessary business, &c. steal away the time, that should be given to prayer; there is a want of reverence in the former way, and a want of zeal and piety in this; both then ought to be amended by fuch as defire to do well.

pointon. I defire all others elses and never to excuse it trath, Melethoets, of irreveing porture of laying their



Of Physicions, R.c.

#### AC ALCOLO ALCO HUA P. TOXXXI.

Of Distractions and Dryness in Time of Prayer.

Q. WHAT do you mean by Distractions in prayers?

A. I mean all fuch thoughts, as occur in time of prayer, that belong not to prayer.

Q. But if the thoughts, that occur, have no

barm in them?

A. If they are not evil in themselves, yet they are evil in time of prayer; because it is both against reason and the respect we owe to God, to be thinking of any thing else, when we are speaking to him.

Q. Are all fuch thoughts finful?

A. If a person willingly and with reflection entertains them, they are an offence. But if upon first observing them, he turns his mind from them, and raises it to God, he cannot then be charged with the guilt; except there has been some negligence in not taken notice of them so soon as he might. Whence if a person at prayer, dwells long upon impertinent thoughts, it argues neglect; since not to be watchful then, cannot be excused from a fault.

ar

no

th

fix

ba its th

th:

wi no be

wh fai

ma do be

noi

Q. But if distracting or impertinent thoughts return again, when they have been removed.

A. If they return five hundred times, and are so often turned out again, there is no fault in them.

Q. Can such prayer be acceptable, which is

thus interrupted and disturbed?

A. Yes very acceptable: For though it be not quiet prayer, nor with the mind long fixed on God: Yet the spirit has been altogether united to God, in fighting his battle, and labouring to discharge faithfully its duty to him. And therefore if christians thus disturbed in their devotions, can find that they have carefully endeavoured to put from them all unseasonable and distracting thoughts, they ought not to be disquieted within themselves; for though they have no satisfaction in such prayer, yet there can be no question of its being accepted by God, who being witness of their sidelity, will not fail to be their rewarder.

Q. Is their no help for preventing distraction.

A. Not altogether, because of the devil's malice, and our own weakness: But if we do what lies in our power, they cannot then be imputed to us.

Q. What is it we can do.

A. First, There is to be due care used, not to live under the guilt of wilful sin. The

reason is, because good prayer is the effect of God's grace, and the work of the Holy Spirit moving and raising the heart to God. Now how can this be expected by such, as live enemies to God? How can these hope for any particular protection, from the malicious attempts of the enemy, or from their own corruption? A good life then is the best foundation of good prayer. Where there is this preparation, the mind is more free from the disquiets of many passions, it is with more earnestness carried towards God, and the privilege of his grace may be more reasonably expected by those who are faithful in his service.

Q. Then I see you despair of their praying

well, who are in fin?

A. What does the scripture say? "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, his prayer shall be an abomination," Prov. xxviii. 9. Till sinners have sincere desires of being converted to God, and heartily seek his grace, I can see no reason to think they pray well, or that their prayers will be heard.

Q. What other help can you prescribe, to

prevent distraction.

A. That christians labour to moderate all kinds of passions, affections, desires and solicitudes, as to things of this world, that

the ter boo ide cir

wo

are adv
If p
a cro
of i
plai
to
cro
tine
the

the

mudifq

of t

ceri

And diffe

pior

they withdraw themselves from such entertainments, divertisements, conversation, books, &c. as fill the mind with unprofitable ideas, and live in as much retirement, as circumstances will allow.

Q. Is not this to advise people to go out of the world?

A. They who have the least to do in it, are in the best circumstances. All that I advise is, to leave the unnecessary part of it. If persons find, that standing in the midst of a crowd they cannot pray, they must go out of it, as well as they can, or elfe their complaints are vain. And what then are those do, who, at prayer, find their minds crowded with a thousand vain, idle, impertinent thoughts? If these are their hinderance they must set their minds at greater liberty. And how can this be, but by forfaking as much as may be the occasion of their disquiet? But for this they need not go out of the world, but only moderate every concern of it.

Q. And if persons should do thus, will they be exempt from distractions in prayer?

A. No, but still more quiet than others. And if they be not, yet there is a very great difference.

First, That the distractions of moderate, pious, and retired christians, are not brought

fo

or

th

fic

he

to

he

wl

ye

in

pr

ly

be

fel

rea

go

pu

for

an

ha

fair

tov

hu

Th

upon themselves through their own fault. but are fuch, as they know not how to avoid, and this is a great comfort to them, both in bearing the trouble with patience, and standing against them with courage. It is not so in other christians, who live a vain, unprofitable and diffipated life; who daily feed and enlarge their passions and desires, and open their hearts to all that is idle or impertinent : For these have no distractions in prayer, but what are their own fault; every return of them is a reproach of their guilt, and here can be no peace amidst these, but what must be the effect of the same carelessness in prayers, which attends them all the day, and hinders them from being ever ferious: And what is this, but the peace of not thinking.

adly, That the distractions of good christians are permitted for their greater improvement in virtue and making them more humble and more depending on God. Whilst in others, they are the effect and punish-

ment of their fin.

Q. Does God then try good Christians with

distractions in time of prayer?

A. Yes, and sometimes with such a dryness of spirit, that they find no comfort or sense of devotion in whatever prayers they say. And yet if these go on constantly per-

forming their exercise of prayer, resolving to omit nothing on their parts, notwithstanding the discouragements they meet with; their sidelity will be most acceptable to God, and he will again return with light and blessings to them, who continued faithful to their duty even when they had no light or comfort to help them on.

Q. Is this what you advise, in time of such

dryness of spirit?

A. It is what all ought to do; so that whether it be the trial of virtue, or neglect: yet still it must be adviseable to go on faithful in every duty, therefore those are to be reproved who, at fuch time, become melancholy and dejected in spirit, concluding God to be angry, and that he has withdrawn himfelf from them, and hence have no heart to read or pray or go about any thing for the good of their fouls, fince all feems to be to no purpose. These are to be reproved I fay, for prefumptuously judging God's judgments and there lying down in despair, where they have a great work upon their hands, and a fair opportunity of advancing strongly towards heaven.

Q. What then should they do?

A. I have already told you. They are to humble themseves under the hand of God. They are to leave themselves entirely to God,

they are to befeech him to lay no burthen on them, but such as he will give them strength to bear. They are by a sincere repentance, to endeavour to make their peace with God, and turn away whatever anger they have provoked by their sins: Lastly, They are to go on in every duty, with patience, waiting till God shall visit them with comfort and light. If they take this method, all their barrenness of spirit, whether it be the punishment of past neglect, or the trial of their virtue, will be improved to their advantage, and they will be great gainers by what they groaned under as their missfortune.



#### C-H A P. XXXII.

### Of Repentance.

Q. WHAT is true repentance.

A. A hearty forrow for having offended God, or a conversion of the heart from fin to God.

Is all forrow for fin to be confided in, as a

true repentance ?

A. No, for many finners reflecting upon their ill state, are troubled at it; yet this trouble, though for sin, is not repentance;

whilst

ir

fc

fi

of

he

th

he

lut

tha

it l

and

gre

whilst they presently smother it, giving no check to such uneasy thoughts, and never putting a stop to their sinful course.

Well, but if they resolve to make their peace with God, and in prayer are troubled for their offences, and ask for

mercy?

A. All this may be without repentance: For there are some tempers, who having a natural tenderness, are presently touched, upon reading some prayers, or upon hearing some awakening discourse; and though so sensibly moved as to break forth into sighs and tears, yet presently forget all, without any endeavours or farther thoughts of amendment; now is it not plain that this sorrow for sin is no repentance?

Q. What forrow do you call this?

A. A forrow of the spirit, but not of the heart. The spirit of man is moved upon the consideration of its unhappy state, and the apprehension of punishment: But the heart is still hardened, and the serious resolution of amendment enters not into it; so that whatever good proposals are made, yet it heartily undertakes nothing.

2. Is not this to bring all to uncertainty, and to make confusion in a business of this

great concern?

A. It is to prevent confusion in a business Vol. XII.

of so great concern. For if Christians should mistake every passing trouble that touches them, for true repentance; and perhaps conclude their peace to be made with God, because they have prayed with tears, and with a sense of their unhappy state; how easily might they, by so doing, prepare for everlasting consustion, by sinding all their sins, at the last hour, charged against them, from which they had a long time supposed themselves discharged?

Q. What then do you prescribe for more

in tins pon!

10

C

in

pi

be

re

up

eff wl

fecurity in this case?

A. Prayers, tears, fighs, and all kind of trouble for fin, are good figns in every finner that thinks of repentance; but yet fuch is the infincerity of our nature, fuch the uncertainty of our inward motions, fuch our inconstancy in the proposals of good, that Christians ought not to depend upon them as the evidence of a sincere repentance, except they find them attended or followed close with such good endeavours, as may be proper, in the case, for the amendment proposed, and the beginning a new life.

Q. What endeavours are these to be?

A. These cannot be here set down in particular, because there is as great variety in the disorders of the soul as of the body,

and as great a difference in the remedies proper for them, and the methods of their cure. It is enough here to consider, that when the foul is under any finful diforder (as of fenfuality, intemperance, pride, covetoulnels, prodigality, love of the world, &c.) there is as great necessity of using remedies, or doing something for its cure, as in case of a broken leg or disjointed arm; and it is no less presuming upon miracles, to expect help, without using proper means for it.

2. Is there nothing more particular can

be faid upon this point?

stan-side of victors A. Yes, fomething may be added; by confidering farther, that the amendment of fome fins depends upon avoiding the occafions of them, as in case of drunkenness. immoderate gaming, prodigal expences, or any kind of fenfuality; when a Christian, looking back upon his past fins, observes that such company, and such particular conversation, has been the provocation or occasion of whatever sins he has committed in that kind: Here, in this case, neither prayers, nor tears, nor forrow for fin, canbe depended on as the effects of a fincere repentance, except he absolutely resolves upon separating from such occasions, and effectually takes care to put in execution what he has thus refolved,

2. A Christian finding his sin to be in wasting his estate, and exposing his family to great inconveniences by his extravagant expences and disorderly life; can have no considence in his tears, or trouble of mind, except he in fact retrenches his expences, and reforms the disorders of his life, by the

observance of better discipline.

3. A Christian finding his sin to be in his little concern for God, his soul, and eternity; and this occasioned by his sloth, immoderate indulging sleep, little application to prayer and good books; being fond of unprofitable, idle, and disorderly company; observing no discipline; following, with eagerness, all kind of dissipations and divertisements; may have his time of serious thoughts; pray, sigh, lament his unhappiness, and beg pardon for his great neglect of salvation, and manifold transgressions; and yet without any degree of true repentance, except he puts a stop to his former method, and undertakes a new life.

n

er

ar

an

fu

pr

18

wh

4. A Christian finds his fin to be in a custom of backbiting, promoting dissensions, lying, swearing, cursing, &c. He with tears asks forgiveness of God, with sighs bewails his misery, and inwardly finds a weight of grief oppressing his spirits; and yet, if upon this he keeps no stricter guard

upon his lips than usual, but boldly or heedlesly goes on in all his former liberties, his repentance is to be suspected as counterfeit, and he has reason to condemn himself of being so infincere with God and his own soul, in an affair of this weighty concern.

flubbornness, pride, passion, and in his affections, with violence carrying him to undue or finful objects: He sighs at his unhappy circumstances, and often with grief asks pardon: But if he does not endeavour, by frequent humiliations and self-denials, to bring his own will into better government, and break the violence of his passions; what considence can be had in all his trouble of mind; since for want of manifesting itself in these good effects, there is too much reason to fear its not being a trouble to repentance?

From these instances it appears, that in all habitual and wilful sin, there are particular endeavours to be used for its amendment; and that since the end of repentance is the amendment of sin, that repentance is to be suspected as not sincere, which appearing in prayers, tears, or some passing trouble only, is not followed with serious considerations of what endeavours are necessary for amendment, and with the execution of such endea-

yours. These are the steps of hearty and sincere repentance, especially in all sins habitual and customary; and by these it is to be distinguished from that which is only superficial and infincere.

2. If a Christian then ever returns to his wicked course, his former repentance

ought to be suspected as infincere?

A. No such matter. True repentance does not make us angels; neither are sight and tears always evidence enough of true repentance. The most sincere resolutions may be broken. But where little or no endeavours are used for an amendment of life, I cannot but fear there is as little evidence of a true conversion.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

e difficulty of amen

Of the Endeavours of True Repentance, for the Amendment of Life.

2. FROM what has been already faid in the foregoing chapter, I fee true repentance is to be accompanied with endeavours for amendment of life; but this being a point of concern, I defire to know

what kind of endeavours these ought to be, and to what degree they ought to arise, for satisfying conscience, and delivering it from

Il an xiety and disquiet?

A To give some satisfaction in this point, I lay down two rules or heads, which ought to be particularly regarded in repentance, and from which the measures are to be taken of the endeavours for amendment of life.

First, That the endeavours of amendment ought to be proportioned to the diffi-

culty of amending.

Second, that the endeavours of amendment ought to be proportioned to the great concern of the undertaking; it being in the cause of God, of salvation, and of our eternity.

2. How are they to be proportioned to

the difficulty of amending?

A. Do you not remember what Christ fays, Luke xiv. 28, "Which of you, intending to build a tower, fitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?—Or what king goin, to make war with another king, sitteth not down first, and consuleth whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" In which words we are put in mind, that

whoever acts rationally and prudently, must, in every work he undertakes, see that he be provided with, and make use of, means proper and fufficient for accomplishing the work proposed.

2. How is this applied to our present

purpose?

A. That whoever proposes amendment of life, does not act rationally or prudently, if he makes not use of such means as may be proper for effecting what he proposes; and confequenty, if the amendment be difficult, there must be some means resolved upon, and undertaken, answerable to the difficulty; or elfe the undertaking is not rational, but in vain.

2. What is the practice of this doctrine?

A. That repenting finners, who are ferious in their resolutions of amendment, ought not to content themselves with prayer only, but to confider the disorder in which they are; and accordingly as they find it, great or little, violent or moderate, so to use proper means for overcoming it. For though prayer be good, yet to pray and lie still, where work is to be done, is mocking and tempting God, even as lying in a ditch, and crying, God help me! and to use means not proportioned to the difficulty, is the next degree of the fame mockery; like weeding a garden with a broom, or curing a gangreen with a cobweb.

2. If a person has tried what he judged

proper, and without any effect?

A. What do physicians or surgeons in the like case? They repeat the same again; and if they have reason to suspect the medicine too weak for the diffemper, they order fomething of ftronger operation; and if nothing elfe will do, they cut off one part to fave the rest. Thus is repentance to proceed; it tries variety of means, and, if without fuccess, it tries again something more violent; and if still the stubborn diftemper will not yield, then, without any regard to convenience, interest, or ease, it cuts off even that which is as dear to nature as hand or eye, chufing rather thus to make nature suffer in one part, than to stand still and let all be loft.

2. Is not this hard doctrine?

A. It is what Christ has taught us: "If thy hand or foot scandalize (or offend) thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: It is better for thee to enter into his lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than

having two eyes, to be cast into hell." Matt. xviii. 8. And what is this, but that, if that be the occasion of our sin which is as dear and necessary to us as our hand or eye, we are to separate it from us, and chuse rather to suffer such a loss, than by living on in fin, to lose our foul? Here the most violent remedy is prescribed, where it is necessary for the cure. A like proportion must be observed in all other cases, and this is what the Baptist preached to sinners, where he fays, " Bring forth worthy fruits of penance:" Or, " Bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" which, in the margin of the English Bible, Anno. 1665, is thus expounded, " Fruits answerable to amendment of life." If this be not done in all cases, the forrow for fin is to be suspected as not being the forrow of true repentance.

Q. What do you mean by your fecond rule, That the endeavours of amendment ought to be proportioned to the great concern of the undertaking, it being in the cause of God, of salvation, and of eternity?

A. I mean, that whoever is ferious, mult do business of a great concern with a great care; and there being no other business of grea er concern to a Christian under the guilt of sin, than true repentance and amendment of life; if he does not, in this work, use the greatest care, it is to be seared he is not serious in what he undertakes.

Q. Have you any instance that may give

light to this?

A. If a person, in a business whereon his life depends, should be no more diligent in. foliciting and managing it, than if it were a thing of no value, and as if he were indifferent whether he had fuccess or no; would not this careless way of proceeding condemn him of great folly or madness, in not knowing or valuing what he did? If a perfon should undertake to defend a town against an enemy, and take no care to put men into it, or to repair fortifications, or to raife works; would not this be children's play in the greatest concern? If a rich jewel were loft, and no more care used for finding it, than if it were a worthless trifle; would not this arraign the undertaker of deceit or folly?

2 How is this to be applied?

A. That the amendment of life being a business of the highest concern, it ought to be done with the greatest care; so reason and faith require: And whoever, upon undertaking it, does not proceed with the care, diligence, solicitude, industry, and water, fulness which is due to the importance of the design, but presently lays by the thought.

and forgets what he has undertaken; or, if he thinks of it, and is so little concerned, that he uses no more care in it, than if it were a matter of indifferency: It is plain from hence, that such a person is not in earnest, that his trouble for sin was not the repentance, and that his management of the cause of God and his soul, when duly examined, will prove no more serious than that of children's play.

2. Then you will allow of no repentance to be fincere, which is not attended with

fuch fuitable endeavours?

A. This is a general rule, and if there be any exceptions, yet they are not to be depended on; for as the tree is known by the fruit, fo is repentance by the fruit it brings forth. And where there is no fruit, that is, no endeavours, fuch as may be proper in the case for amendment, there is reason to question the whole proceeding, as only ceremonious and external, but not hearty and fincere. If this doctrine should raise scruples, it is what I defire; for I cannot but fear there are too many who mistake repentance, and prefume of forgiveness of their fins, when, by their little care of amendment, they have reason to think themselves still under the whole guilt of them.

#### **ENDINIDIZIONALENDINI**

FREE CEST CONTRACTOR

#### C H A P. XXXIV.

elules no more ease in it illies.

THE THREE THE THREE APPROPRIET.

Of Scruples and Immoderate Fears.

If all repentance is to be suspected, as you have declared, which is not attended with endeavours proper for amendment; will not Christians be hence perplexed with endless scruples, who observe no amendment in themselves, fearing all to proceed from their neglect in not using due endeavours?

A. To prevent mistake in this doctrine, I must distinguish two forts of Christians: One of such as live under the guilt of wilful sin, of whatever kind it be, and often fall into it: The other of those, who are sensible of no other failings, but such as are almost inseparable from us in this state of weakness.

As to the former fort, under wilful sin, if they use not due endeavours for amendment, but have reason to accuse themselves of neglect, it is fit they should have scruples, and from the sense of their neglect, be solicitous to do better.

But if they earnestly defire to overcome themselves, consider and take advice of the most proper means, labour seriously, and are truly solicitous to accomplish their works; then there is no reason for scruples, although they find not the effect of their endeavours. Because they are using the means, and though not with the desired effect, yet this may be no fault of theirs, but according to the secret of God's councils, who often permits sinners to abide a long time in this state of recovering from sin, so to make them more humble, and to convince them, that their amendment is not from themselves, but from God giving a blessing to their endeavours.

The only thing therefore these have to do, is to go on using means for their amendment, being humble under the want of success, and with patience waiting, till God shall shew favour to them; still considering and asking advice, whether there be any thing else they can do, which may prove more essectual to their purpose. For amendment of life being their business, they must still be industrious in it, and never be tired; it being certain, that those endeavours are very often not in vain, but much to their advantage, which, to their appearance, are without essect.

2. Now, as to the other fort of Christians, who are guilty only of such weaknesses, as are almost inseparable from us?

A. These fort of Christians are not concerned in the rules. I have given to others; and therefore have no reason to take occasion of scruple from what was never spoken to them.

Q. What then, are these not to take notice of their endeavours for amendment?

A. I advise them earnestly to desire the amendment of all the failings to which they are subject; likewise to endeavour it as much as they can, and to take notice of their endeavours as much as they please: But I would not have them suspect their repentance of insincerity, if they do not find their endeavours for amendment sollowed with success.

Q. Why not these, as well as the others?

A. Because the sins of the others are more wilful, and proceed from a wilful neglect, and by a better care might be remedied. But in these it is not altogether so: For though they are really failings, which they observe in themselves, yet they cannot be judged the effect of a wilful neglect; since there is no human care can prevent their return, but with all the diligence we can possibly use, still at times, we shall find the effect of that weakness, which being annexed to this mortal state, we may complain of, but have it not in our power to remedy entirely.

Q. What then are Christians to do in this case?

A. They are to be patient under the conditions of their state, and bear the burthen of it with the submission of an humble mind. Let them, with all the earnestness of their soul, desire to be perfect as angels; but let not this desire make them impatient under the unhappiness of their present state. They, who will come into the land of promise, must not murmur; but, with submission, bear the difficulties, wants, and trials of the desert. For it is by such a submission they make the best preparation for the happiness they desire.

2 Is there any good use they can make

of their daily imperfections?

A. Yes, a very good use, if they will have

but patience under the trouble of them.

First, these may serve to keep them humble. We are ever in danger of pride; and never more in danger, than when we see no impersection in ourselves. This is a sight, it may be, we cannot bear; and therefore it is the essect of a providential mercy, to permit a mixture of impersections in us, by this lesser evil to preserve us from a greater.

2. These impersections may oblige them to walk with more circumspection and fear of themselves, and deliver them from the

dangers of rashness and presumption

3. They may see in them their great dependence on God, who find all their own endeavours so ineffectual in such ordinary

conflicts or attempts.

4. These may make them more fervent in their prayers, who see the absolute necessity of God's daily help: More constant in humbling themselves before God and asking mercy, who see the daily want of it: More compassionate and patient with their neighbour in his failings, from the daily experience of their own.

5. These may serve to lessen in them the love of this world, who see it a state inseparable from evil; and hence give them a stronger desire of being delivered from this

body of fin and death.

These and many other good effects may follow, if whilst they endeavour to overcome all imperfections, they yet preserve peace and patience under the trouble of such as they cannot yet master.

Q. But if they follow not this advice?

A. Then there will follow as many ill effects.

First, They will be disquieted with endless scruples, seeking and labouring for comfort, but finding none.

2. They will have no fatisfaction in pray-

er or Sacraments, or other good exercifes.

3. Dejection will feize upon them, they will apprehend all they suffer, to be the effect of God's anger, and hence fearing all they do to be to no purpose, will be tempted to

do nothing.

these will weaken their spirits, injure their health, rack them with anxious thoughts; and these will so wholly possess the mind, that vain imaginations will not leave it in their power to advance in any good, or permit them to follow or believe the best advice that can be given them: Thus they will be unhappy through their own ill management.

2. What must they then do? Is there no

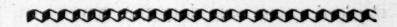
remedy?

A. It is much easier to prevent than cure this evil. The only thing they have to do, is to make choice of a good adviser, and follow his direction. They have disordered all the faculties of their soul, so that they neither see nor judge aright themselves; what then have such to do, but to be advised? If they have any reason left, it will shew them, that this is reasonable, and that this is the only means for recovering themselves from

that unhappy darkness, which for their stronger delusion, seems to them to be light.

2. But if they think their adviser does not truly understand their case, or will not believe it?

A. Such are very far gone, and therefore most deceived. There is nothing more easy than to understand their case. This then is only a plea to justify the stubbornness of their humour. They are very easy in believing others mistaken, when their greatest interest depends upon believing so of themselves. This must be their way to peace; for till they become so humble, as to distrust themselves, and with considence and cheerfulness to obey those whom God has put over them, they can expect no cure, but the daily increase of their distemper.



#### CHAP. XXXV.

Of Sadness and Melancholy.

2 Is fadness a part of repentance?

A. If it be a grief or trouble for having offended God, it is the same as repentance.

A. It is commonly understood otherwise, not being generally taken to signify grief for having offended God, but rather an oppression of the mind, caused by some vexation, lying as a heavy weight upon the spirits. So that while grief may in some occasions be reasonable, sadness is not so, but rather a passion, which is not justifiable.

Q. But if it be for fin?

A. Even in this case it is not allowable; for though grief for sin be reasonable, yet when it settles and fixes into sadness, then it is a passion, and therefore not reasonable.

2. How can this be?

A. It may easily be a sin, to become sad for sin: For this may be the essect of vexation, impatience, and pride, as when a person resolving upon amendment, and afterwards relapsing into his usual weakness, loses all patience at the disappointment of his resolutions, and instead of grieving sincerely for sin, vexes at the experience of his own weakness, and sinks under a weight of sadness, so as now to think it to no purpose to attempt amendment any more. Such sadness as this, is certainly no part of repentance, but a weak and faulty passion, having pride and presumption at the root, and a great deal of impatience to make it up.

Sometimes, instead of sadness, this vexation turns into anger, and is still far from Because true repentance, repentance. though it hates fin and punishes it, yet still it is not with a mind exasperated with pasfion; for this is an unreasonable and vexatious disturbance, which discomposes, if not blinds the understanding, judges unjustly, and undertakes rashly, and like a passionate judge, feldom passes a sentence according to equity. Whereas repentance, while it purfues fin, does all with a composed mind, retains moderation, meeknefs, and inward peace, and thus being in circumstances of better discerning all things and judging aright, it follows the rules of the Gospel, while it undertakes to reform according to the Gospel.

Q. Well, but if the sadness, you began to speak of, be not repentance, has it any other

good in it?

A. I can tell many evils it has, but no

good.

First, If it continues any time, it injures the health of the body, and thus brings on many inconveniences and variety of uneasiness, which affects the mind.

2. It weakens or dulls all the spirits, by which the soul acts, and lays the mind under such an oppression or weight, that it has

no courage for any thing that seems difficult, and has no vigour or life in whatever it dares undertake.

3. It discomposes the reason, darkens the understanding, and disorders the judgment, so that there is scarce any thing discerned or judged aright, where this evil prevails: But vain and chimerical imaginations, are the light it sets up, and by these it keeps the soul a slave to a long succession of delusions.

4. It raises many vain and groundless fears, which rob the soul of all peace; it perplexes it with endless scruples, which are

a hinderance in all that is good.

5. It lays open the foul to infinite temptations; the devil having many advantages both in the laziness of this passion, and in its fears, perplexities, and doubts.

6. It hinders the improvement of time, by its charming but useless amusements, by

its sloth, uncertainty, and irresoluteness.

7. It destroys very often inward peace, and makes way for dissensions, by a jealous and exceptious humour generally attending it, by which the worst construction is put upon every thing that is said or done, and great malice is discovered even in the ways of innocence and the most sincere proceedings.

8. It discourages, or makes void the best

offices of charity and friendship, whilst it perverts the best advice, taking it generally amis, and falling either into passion or melancholy; so that in the greatest occasions, friends choose rather to be silent, than to venture the effects of their abused charity.

9. It deprives a Christian of the great benefit of being advised and directed in the way of salvation; by making him difficult in following counsel; by raising fears, such as put him upon questioning even what is certain and safe above dispute; by causing doubts in commands, and having greater regard to his own imaginations, than to all that reason can suggest. And thus the best advice comes to have no effect.

2. If the evil be fo great, what is to be done in it?

A. The manifold mischief of it, both as to soul and body, ought to make Christians as a fraid of it; so as to be industrious in standing against the first approaches, and not to comply so far with humour, as to let in an enemy, who, if ever he gets footing, will scarce be removed. To raise cheerfully the heart to God, under all oppressive thoughts, will be a good expedient for this; as likewise to endeavour, at all times, to rejoice in the will of God being done, and to throw by all disquiet with as much speed as may

18

g

ut

nd

ys

d-

eft

be, in submission to the divine appointment.

2 But where this evil has already seized,

what is to be done?

A. Such Christians ought not to yield, but struggle with their distemper, and labour to master it.

First, They are to find some discreet perfon, with whom they may, with freedom and confidence, communicate their thoughts; one who may be able to set right their mistakes and ill constructions, to remove their vain fears, and give them both courage and comfort.

2. They are to confult proper persons to see what help may be expected from physic and the order of diet.

3. They are not to yield to, nor sit still under vain amusements, or the working of their fears.

4. They are to feek fome employment, or apply themselves to some business, such as may take up their thoughts.

5. They are rather to choose innocent recreation or conversation, than give their time to disquieting or oppressing thoughts.

6. They are to suspect their own reasoning and judgment, as often as they are commenting upon their own unhappiness, pretend to foresee missortunes, or construe their their neighbour's words or actions, so as to cause in themselves disquiets: In these and all other cases of resentments, they are to suspect their own reasoning, put a stop to it, divert it by discourse, business, or any other way.

7. They are not to indulge themselves in sleep or bed in the morning, beyond a seafonable hour; for this distemper is a slug-

gish one, and is fed by laziness.

t,

eir

n-

n-

re-

ue

8. They are to be in earnest, in using their best endeavours against this evil; they are not to trust their own opinion of what they are able to do; but are to labour as against a monster, which, if not mastered, will master them.

9. They are to choose a prudent guide, and resolutely follow his advice, even in things where their inclination makes them averse, and their own reason gives them no light. For while their reason is disordered, it must be safer for them to sollow a better guide.

Q. Are not these hard prescriptions?

A. If these were truly sensible of the mischiefs of their distemper, they would think nothing dissicult that could give them hopes of cure.

2. Do you think it a finful life?

A. I think it to be more distemper, ill Vol. XII.

management, and indifcretion, than fin. But being so very prejudicial to all christian duties, a person must be very much to blame who does not consider and ask advice, and do the best he is able, to overcome it.

Q. If a person should die, not having overcome sadness, melancholy, scruples, &c.

can you hope favourably of him?

A. Yes, I can, if he was willing to be advised, and sincerely endeavoured to overcome them. Hence I do not question, but many who are so very much disordered in this way, as to have no comfort in whatever they do, to be perpetually disquieted, perplexed, racked, and to think all they do to be to no purpose, besides variety of other evil and terrifying thoughts, may find the effects of mercy at their departure, even beyond their hopes.

2. How fo?

A. Because, in many, all this disorder proceeds from an earnest desire of serving God, and a great fear of offending him. Now though there be very ill management in the case, and indiscretion, and sometimes some other ingredients of humour, self-conceit and pride; yet the evil that is in them, being generally constitution and weakness, and the good being of their choice and will, joined with an abhorrence of sin, there is great reason to hope well of them.

## or dount Vist A P. XXXVI.

Of Sadnes and Melanebols."

## Of the Holy Communion.

2. I Shall ask no questions upon this subject, but only what relate to practice. Tell me, therefore, first, what ought a Christian to propose in coming to this holy ordinance?

A. He ought to propose, the participation of the benefits of Christ's passion; and, in particular, to hope for that blessing, which Christ himself proposes, as the proper effect of the holy communion.

2 What is that effect?

A. That which is fet down in the fixth chapter of St John, v. 55, 56, 67. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me.

2. What is the particular effect mention-

ed in these words?

t

25

1.

n,

s,

11,

is

A. It is, That we may abide in Christ, and Christ in us, and that we may live by him: So that all those Christians, who ap-

midd lo liew agod of make

proach to the holy table, ought to do it for this end, That Christ may dwell in them, and they live by him.

2. Cannot this be explained more clear.

ly?

- A. I explain it by the comparison used by St Paul on another occasion. We are like the wild olive-tree, and of ourselves bring forth none but wild fruit, or the fruit of corruption. A Christian ought to desire to bring forth better fruit, even fruit to life everlasting; this he cannot do, except Christ be engrafted in him. He approaches therefore to the holy table, that by means of that sacred food, Christ may be engrafted in his foul, that so he may not bring forth the fruit of the natural stock, which is unprofitable or corrupt, but the fruit of the holy graft, which is fruit to salvation.
- Q. I fee what is to be proposed as to this; but are we not to defire that Christ may dwell in us?
- A. Yes, we are to defire that Christ may live and dwell in us. We are to defire, that Christ would communicate his Spirit and life to us; that so, he becoming the principle of a new life unto us, we may not live according to the inclinations of nature, which being corrupt, lead to sin; but according to the inclinations of Christ, which being holy and divine, lead to God.

By this manner Christ will live in us: Because, as fin lives and reigns in our hearts, when we hear its suggestions, obey it, and are governed by it; so Christ lives in us, when the actions of our life proceed from him, when we give ear to him, when we obey his voice, follow his Spirit, and make all, that is corrupt in us, fubmit to his orders. It is eafily understood, that the fpirit that moves us, and is the beginning of all our actions of life, is the spirit, which lives in us, and by which we live; a good Christian then being sensible, how great his natural corruption is, and that his whole life must be finful, if he moves by this, defires that Christ should come within him, take possession of his heart, undertake the government of it; and if he furrenders himfelf with an entire fubmission, it is plain, then, that moving by the Spirit of Christ, and not his own, Christ dwells in him, and that he lives by Christ.

Q. It is not then a prefent or passing holiness only, which is to be proposed by such

as come to this holy banquet?

A. No, it must be more than this, even a permanent and abiding fanctification. They are not to think of doing that action only well and with due faith, and recollection of mind; for this is only a passing holines;

K iii

but they are to purpose the gaining a new spirit and a new life, even a life, by which they may live for ever. Hence, such as approach to this holy table with a due sense of what they do, ought to be mindful, after receiving, what their life is to be; that having received Christ, the life of Christ ought to be manifested in them; that they now no more live according to the old man, which they have put off, nor regard their own inclinations, nor follow the world, but live by the Spirit of Christ; so that the fruits of this Spirit be ever found in them, that is, the love of God and their neighbour, a fubmission to the will of God, a zeal for his glory, a defire to do good to all, humility, meekness, patience, long-suffering, &c. for fuch is the Spirit and life of Christ.

2. If this be the effect of this facred ordinance, and what is to be proposed by such as partake of it, is it not a great fault in those who are not solicitous, but rather neg-

lect to approach to it?

A. It must certainly be a great fault; for when Christians observe the violence of their own corruption, the danger they are in from hence of daily falling into sin, and the evident hazard, upon this account, of being eternally miserable; have they not reason to enquire for remedy? And since Christ, in this holy institution, has mercifully provided the furest help for overcoming nature, and establishing the foul in grace, must it not be their greatest interest to make use of it? To neglect it then involves many crimes; As, first, An ingratitude towards God, in taking so little notice of, if not despising, the appointments of his mercy. 2dly, A neglect of falvation. 3dly, A wilful abiding in fin. 4thly, An indifferency, or worse, as to the things of God; with a long train of many other consequential guilts, which are much exaggerated, from that great and general folicitude, which Christians have in regard of any temporal advantages: For to fee, how much they are upon the watch, as to these; with what eagerness they catch at them; how fenfibly they grieve at the misfortune or overlight, if any, through want of forefight, has passed them by, or, by the greater industry of others, have been taken out of their hands, is enough to condemn them of a most criminal floth or contempt, in regard of God and their own fouls; when having fuch considerable advantages, provided and even offered to them, they pass them by with as little concern, as if they were altogether useless to them.

t

2. If they judge themselves unworthy,

what would you have them do?

A. If they are unworthy of approaching to this holy table, are they not much more so, of being admitted into heaven? The same unworthiness, which excludes them from one, will shut them out of the other: And do not they know, in this case, what they are to do? They must either mend or despair: For where can their hopes be of seeing and possessing God, who judge themselves unworthy of partaking of his temporal ordinance, and will not take care to remove the unworthiness?

Q. Do not many partake of the holy communion, and are to far from being the better for it, that it will be to their greater

condemnation?

A. And will this justify a man for living a heathen, because many, who believe in God, are not the better for it, but even abuse this faith to their greater condemnation? If some abuse and prophane the greatest blessings and the most necessary means of salvation, they must answer for their own wickedness; but their wickedness can be no warrant for others to neglect the means of salvation, or to esteem them usedless, without drawing upon themselves a greater weight of guilt than they will be

able to bear. God is merciful in appointing us helps, and the neglect of them cannot be without fin.



### C H A P. XXXVII.

# Of Patience.

Let This life is to be manifested in them:
Tell me some particulars, in which this ought to be, and what must be observed, for gaining this character of a true disciple.

A. It will be a great help in this work,

if we endeavour to be patient.

and the relate work white

2. How fo?

A. Because to go on with this work well, requires the most serious application and best attention of the soul. Now patience is that, which very much contributes to this, in the great freedom it procures, and defending the soul from those many disturbances, which otherwise would frequently interrupt the undertaking, and put it in hazard of being never finished.

2. How do you understand this?

A. I mean thus; that the foul, like the hands, cannot go on with any difficult work well, if it be subject to great disturbances. Now, consider a person that has but little patience: Such an one is eafily put into diforder; every little accident disquiets him; an ordinary provocation raises his passion; and his mind being thus discomposed, and upon the fret, there is not one thing belonging to his foul he can do well. This is a general hinderance to whatever he propoles of good. He cannot then pray, nor recollect himself, nor think of repentance, but is presently interrupted; he cannot then shew compassion or tenderness where it is due, nor scarce speak without giving offence to others, because the disorder of the mind destroys that moderation and mildness, without which nothing can be done to edification.

2. Then I see you will have an impatient

person do nothing well?

A. He is certainly under a great disadvantage, being ever exposed to variety of disturbances. Experience gives sufficient proof how much inward peace contributes to the performance of all spiritual duties: And since the want of patience so often disturbs this peace, it is evident that the impantage of the state of the series of the seri

tient Christian lies under a very great disadvantage, and whatever he proposes, is in danger of not doing it well. Christ, in telling us, that "in patience we shall possess our souls," does in effect tell us, that by impatience we lose the possession of them: And what then can we do, when our souls, our reason, our understanding, our judgment, are not our own, but we have lost the command of them?

2. It is evident enough; but what can they do, who are of this uneasy, fretful, and

impatient temper?

A. This is a question becoming a Heathen, who has not motives or helps for overcoming nature; but it ought not to be heard from a Christian: The first principle of whose Gospel is, that he "deny himself," and whose faith assures him, that salvation depends upon the practice of it.

2. How should this principle work in

him scour as

A. It should oblige him to such industry and assiduous endeavours, in standing against nature and the inclination of temper, as by degrees to work himself into a better constitution. It should make him assamed of being so easily disturbed with trisses, when he sees that every such disturbance indisposes him, and makes him unfit for the duties of

fider himself in the way to eternity, and that his salvation depends upon his performance of such duties as God has enjoined him, and if he has any faith, he must necessarily be consounded to see himself so easily unsitted for the performance; and by his concern for trisles, to lose his concern for heaven. Whoever, therefore, desires to put on Christ, must first put on patience, that so he may go on with steadiness in the practice of such exercises, by which he is to learn Christ.

2. Is patience necessary upon any other

A. Yes, because it is not only a help for learning Christ, but likewise one principal point, by which we are to give proof of Christ abiding in us.

2. How is this?

A. The principal part of our redemption, which Christ undertook, was in suffering, and his suffering with an humble patience, by a sacrifice of his will to the will of his eternal Father, is that which is most worthy of his sanctity, and what he most recommends to our imitation. Whoever then proposes to be a follower of Christ, and to live by his Spirit, must manifest it in this particular; he must show it in the practice

of an humble patience; or elfe he plainly shews, that he knows not Christ, whose follower he pretends to be, nor lives at all by his Spirit.

2. How do you clear this?

A. Because as Christ is not contrary to himself, so neither is his Spirit. Christ then being meek, humble, and patient; wherever he dwells, this must be his Spirit. Those, then, who live not by this Spirit, do evidently demonstrate that Christ, or his Spirit, abide not in them.

2. And yet are there not many exemplary

Christians subject to great impatience?

A. They cannot be very exemplary who are so; because the exemplarity of a Christian confists in being conformable to his pattern, who is Christ Jesus, and manifesting the head in the members, for the edifying the whole body. Now where can be the conformity of angry, proud, impatient suffering, with the humble suffering of Christ? And if no conformity, then no exemplarity?

2. Do you then condemn all impatient

Christians?

A. Of not being exemplary I do: For impatience is so remarkably unlike the Spirit of Christ, that however a Christian may abound in other good qualities, yet if he be impatient, this takes off from all the rest,

and he must frequently give offence, instead of good example. For how is he like his head,

First, Who betrays an impatience upon every little pain or uneafinefs; whereas Christ patienly suffered to be torn and rack-

ed in all his body?

2dly, Who becomes impatient upon every thwarting word, or little contradiction: whereas Christ suffered a perpetual contradiction all his life, and even from those whose good he sought, and for whom he defired to become a facrifice?

adly, Who cannot bear, even deferved reproof without impatience; whereas Christ, who could deferve none, with moderation and mildness heard and answered, when the works of his infinite wisdom, charity, and goodness were unjustly censured by those whose malice would not permit them to understand them aright? of sold sold a sta

4thy, Who being a finner, and deferving many severe judgments, is subject to variety of inward and outward impatience, upon fuffering little inconveniences, or upon the apprehension of want; whereas Christ made choice of all inconveniences of life, and with patience suffered them, who was Lord of

5thy, Who presently discovers impatience,

if every thing be not done to his will and humour, being only a poor, finful, and contemptible worm; whereas Christ was contradicted and opposed all his life, whose will was always holy, and ought to be obeyed?

6thly, Who, upon every word of seeming contempt, or of any reflection, is presently disturbed; whereas Christ with patience was exposed to the scorn of all, and with silence heard false accusations in public advanced

against him?

Lastly, Who loses all patience upon being put out of his way, upon more than ordinary labour, upon the disagreeable humour of others, upon little troubles and losses that happen; whereas Christ with patience underwent a laborious life, and with an entire submission to his Father's will, suffered the loss of all comforts, the greatest of all torments, and being a spotless lamb, gave his life a sacrifice for sinners, under the ignominy of a malesactor?

This impatience is not any refemblance of conformity to the head; and therefore whoever indulges it, or does not fincerely labour to overcome it, is not in this exemplary, and gives not a good proof of Christ or his Spirit abiding in him; fince he is wanting in that which was the principal

character of our Redeemer.



OF Translated and APP. Branch

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

ave severe and

## Of Troubles and Afflictions.

A RE the troubles and afflictions of this life always the punishment of fin?

A, They are not always so: For though Gain was afflicted for his sin, and Pharach, and the children of Israel in the desert, and Saul and David, and other kings of Isaerl; yet we find many others visited with severe afflictions, who were the faithful servants of God, and not punished for sin, as Abraham, Elias, Job, Toby, the apostles, the man born blind, and all the primitive martyrs.

2. What then may be the defign of Pro-

vidence, in afflicting the just?

A. The scripture mentions some; as first, for the trial of their sidelity, as in Abraham, Job, and Toby. 2dly, For their improvement in virtue. 3dly, For their greater resemblance to Christ their head. 4thly, For the increase of their crown. 5thly, For the manifesting the power of God in such weak vessels. Lastly, That God may be glorified.

g

Q. In what manner are Christians to bear troubles, and go through the afflictions of this life?

A. With patience.

2 By what motives are Christians to prevail with themselves to be patient?

A. They have many,

First, Because nothing happens to them, but by the appointment or permission of God. Now God being all-wise, and ordering all for the best, they have reason to submit to whatever he orders, as believing that to be best for them. Again, God's will is always holy, and always just, and therefore always adorable: God's will then being manifest in whatever happens, it ought always to be submitted to, and by submission adored.

2dly, They every day ask in the Lord's Prayer, that God's "will" may "be done on earth as it is in heaven." If they ask this daily, have not they reason to submit to it, when they see it done? To make exceptions then, and grieve with impatience, is to unsay their own prayers, and contradict in their troubles what they have been petitioning all their lives.

3dly, We know not what is good for ourfelves; and that, very often, which we grieve for as our misfortune, is the first step to our happiness. Did not Jacob lament the loss of Joseph, and Joseph his being falsely accused, and his imprisonment; and yet were not all these the steps by which Providence manisested itself wonderfully in their behalf, and ushered in their greatest good? The nobleman (Joh. iv. 46) grieved at the sickness and danger of his son; and yet this, which he lamented as the missortune of his family, was the occasion that brought both him and his family to Christ.

athly, We know not ourselves, till we are exercised and proved by many trials. We know not our dependence on God, till we experience our own poverty and wants. We know not the world, till we find the uncertainty and vanity of all its goods. If then by troubles we are instructed in these three great lessons, there is reason to have patience with what is so much to our advantage.

5thly, The love of the world, and the great value for its goods, are the greatest impediments of virtue, and what make Christians not only most unwilling, but most unsit to die. Afflictions are the surest remedy against both these charms: The world being uneasy, is more willingly lest; and its treachery being discovered, puts Christians upon seeking something more solid. And

is there not some patience due, where they

are fo well instructed to eternity?

cause of the oppressed, to be the comforter of the afflicted, the protector of the orphan and widow, and making many promises to such as call upon him in these troubles, and put their trust in him; Christians have reason to be patient under afflictions, which give them such a title to the particular protection of God.

life of all kinds of afflictions; the way he walked in, was the way of the cross: If Christians then suffer, they are in this associated or united to their head. He was scourged and crowned with thorns: If they feel the scourge and the thorns, let them stand by him, and see if they cannot find comfort in such company. If they have their cross, let them follow their leader; and say, It is better to suffer with Christ, that we may be gloristed in him; than to rejoice with the world, and have our portion with it:

8thly, Because though all troubles and afflictions are uneasy to nature, which seeks present peace; yet if we consider them as the exercise which God sends; that they are the means to purify our hearts from the

an usal two ordenings love of the world; that they are the way by which God has led his best fervants, his prophets, apostles, and martyrs; that he has promifed bleffings, and an eternal crown, to fuch as fuffer with patience; and that their forrow shall be turned into joy: Upon this confideration, there is fomething very valuable in the troubles and afflictions of this life; and what nature is averse to, which is guided by fense; faith may defire and embrace, which is directed by the revealed will of God. For if a Christian remembers that he was born for eternity, and that his greatest and only true interest is in gaining everlasting happiness; he cannot but think that valuable and defirable, which is particularly ferviceable for obtaining this end: This he must do, if he has the life of faith in him.

These are some motives, amongst many others, for Christians being patient under all the troubles of this life.

2. Are these proper, whatever the reason

be of their troubles?

A. Yes, Whether their troubles be the effect of God's justice, for the punishment of sin; or of his mercy, for the trial and improvement of virtue, or the increase of their crowns: This is the way for making advantage of them. Wherefore I cannot

ap pa th

is

th

ga far eve

glo 3. us,

mit fecu whe

Ch

kii. rot but disapprove their method, who, upon falling under trouble, and with great curiosity or anxiety enquiring what may be the occasion of their missortune, by this solicitude increase their disquiet, and indiscreetly lose the opportunity of making the right use of their troubles.

Q. What would you have them do?

A. I would have them, upon their first approach, endeavour to receive them with patience; because thus they will turn to their good, whatever is the occasion of them.

Q. And if they endeavour to be patient,

is that enough?

n

e

it

of

ig ot A. This will do very well; but having gained this point, they may take one step farther, and endeavour to have comfort, and even to rejoice in their troubles?

2. How can this be?

A. St Paul knew how to do this: "We glory," fays he, "in tribulation, Rom. v. 3. As the fufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ, 2 Cor. i. 5. I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong," 2 Cor. xii. 10. Here he mentions all kinds of troubles, and owns his comfort in them.

A. In the accomplishment of God's will; in communicating with Christ's passion; in the hopes of that eternal weight of glory, which light tribulation worketh in us. And why may not we do so too? We rejoice in our own will being done; why not much more in God's? Our whole dependence is in Christ's passion, and is it not matter of comfort to be more nearly associated to it? We rejoice in temporal interest; and why not much more, when we are in the best way of securing what is eternal?



### CHAP. XXXIX.

Of the best Method in Time of Trouble.

2. WHAT would you advise a Christian, upon the first approach of any trouble?

pe

en

up

per

der

Ch

hea

him

A. I would advise him immediately to retire, and in private to make his application

to God.

First, Bowing down, as under the hand of God.

adly, Offering himself, with an entire furrender of his own will, of all his inclina-

tions and worldly interests, to the will and disposal of God: nomital gross and

3dly, Befeeching Almighty God to direct, and support, and strengthen him by his grace, that he may entirely comply with his holy will, not offend him by impatience, but make a good use of his troubles.

4thly, Confessing the will of God to be just and holy in his present appointments; and that, as for himself, he is a sinner, and fuffers nothing in comparison of what he

deferves.

of

re. ion

and

atire

lina-

5thly, Casting his whole care upon God, with an entire confidence that he, who has fo many ways fignalized his goodness to the afflicted, will now manifest his mercy to him, by supporting him under his affliction, or delivering him from it.

Lastly, Acknowledging his own weakness, and again repeating his most earnest petitions, that God will be his protector, and enable him to bear the cross, which is laid

upon his shoulders.

2. This is very well, but how shall a person do thus, that is surprised with a sud-

den affliction?

A. If this could not be done, why should Christ call upon all, who labour and are heavy loaden, to come to him, that from him they may receive refreshment? He that calls them, knows what is best for them, and what they can do, if they will. Affliction puts people in mind, that they want comfort and help; and since God alone is he, who is able and willing both to comfort and help them, it ought not to be asked, how they can go to him in trouble; but rather how they can be so much their own enemies as not to go to him?

Q. I have feen some so overcome with grief, as not to know what they do, nor to have any concern for whatever belongs to

them.

A. It may be so, but can you say, They could do no better? Are you sure there was no affectation or sullenness in this? Nature being struck in a tender part, or robbed of what is most dear to it, inclines some tempers very strongly to this sullen or despairing grief; but, whatever the inclination be, it is certain, a Christian must be sensible of the unreasonableness and rebellion of it, and that if he would be resolute, he might follow this sense of reason and faith, and apply himself to God for remedy, instead of lying down under the burthen.

2. What is the unreasonableness of this

kind of grief? waved way not I than

A. It is in the first place, very prejudicial to health; and if it be indulged for any

time,

m

time, it changes the whole constitution, and insensibly causes such an habitual disorder, as is not in the power of art to remedy, but will likely be their exercise and punishment all their lives.

adly, This fort of trouble disables those that yield to it, and makes them either careless or unfit for whatever business belongs to them. And is not this an unreasonable method, that Christians being under a weight, which they complain is too heavy for them, should however so manage it, as to add more weight to that burthen, and increase their own misery?

and thuts out his comforts, who is the only comforter in the time of affliction. For what part can they have in him, who thus, not only shew a dislike of his orders, but likewise set themselves in opposition against them, and wilfully persist in this rebellion?

other exercises, by which they are to ask help for themselves, and prevail with God to come in to their relief; and thus, by ill management, they confirm themselves in misery.

t,

nt

p-

of

is

ial

ny

ne,

2. Then I fee you have no patience with those who lie under sullen or affected grief?

A. These certainly take the wrong way, Vol. XII.

and are their own greatest enemies, doing themselves much more injury than that can possibly do them, which is the occasion of their complaint.

2. What then do you advise them?

A. To take the contrary way; that is, whatever their trouble be, I would have them stand resolutely against this sort of grief, as being unreasonable and finful; I would have them refift inclination, and not take that for their guide, which being corrupt, treacherous, and blind, will lead them into irrevocable ruin. I would have them labour to keep up their spirits inwardly, whatever decency may exact of them outwardly, and as often as they begin to fink, to be upon the watch, and still raise them up, by the help of a vigorous faith and hearty submission to God. Because in such difficult circumstances they want a good heart, and to let their spirits then sink, when they are in greatest need of them, is what, in any other case, would be esteemed folly or madness.

You see here, then, I advise all under trouble, to keep up as cheerful a spirit as they possibly can; because, by this means, they will be better disposed for making their addresses to God and having a more firm hope in him; as likewise for struggling

b

th

th

bu

better with the difficulties of this world:

To help them in this, it may be proper to admit of some charitable and experienced person, by whose discourse and direction the darkness of grief may be dissipated, and the light of reason and faith be restored; and if reading in some choice book be made a part of their daily exercise, it may contribute to the more speedy recovery of the mind.

When the foul is recovered from the first furprise, it must be its best expedient, by a hearty repentance, to endeavour to make its peace with God; that so the scourge may be moderated or removed, if it be the chastisement of sin; or God's goodness more powerfully engaged to its help, if there has

been no fuch provocation given.

as

8,

ng

re

But it cannot be approved, what too many practile, to drown cares with drink, and by sottishness to blunt the sharpness of grief; for this is not to cure evil; but by undue means, to lessen the present sense of it, and (as folly generally punishes itself) to add new tortures to the rack, as soon as the mind begins to think, and reslect upon the ill method it has taken, in going Belzebub, as if there was not a God in Israel.

L ij

2. The advice you give is plain; but how few will take care to follow it?

A. All will endeavour to follow it, that are wife in the management of their eternal concerns.

2. How fo?

A. Because, if a Christian takes this method, when he is in trouble, he makes a great advantage of it, even fo, as to render it very ferviceable to falvation: And if, through passion, sullenness, or impatience, he forfakes this way, he is so far from gaining, that he is a great loser by all his afflictions. And is not that a remarkable indifcretion, to be there a lofer by ill management, where he had a fair opportunity of being a gainer? We call it folly, if a man parts with a piece of money at half; and we laugh at the Indians, who exchange their jewels for trifles: And what must it be called, when a Christian lets that go for nothing, which might have gone a great way in the purchase of heaven? Afflictions are fuch, if rightly managed by a spirit skilled in the Gospel; and they are so much worse than nothing, as to fet him at a greater diftance from it, if they are left to impatience to put them off. How great reason then have Christians to study this point, fince meeting with some difficulty or other, every

CC

ve

ta

fri

ne

hii

day of their lives, they would, by this art, have opportunity of taking every day large steps towards heaven.

#### 変あるでのならででできる

## CHAP. XLI.

Of Docility, or being easy in taking Advice.

2 I Observe there are many and great difficulties in a christian life, can you tell me, what may be a good help to overcome them?

A. The grace of God is the only help; but fince God is pleafed to make use of human means, and likewise to require our concurrence, I think, among other things, it very much depends upon our being of a docile temper, which is easy in being advised, takes the admonitions and even reproof of friends in good part, and by a general sweetness encourages all to be thus friendly to him.

2. To whom does this belong in particu-

A. I know of no body exempted from it.

children, to be of a tractable and docile temper, by which they will be easy in receiving the instructions of their parents, and be shaped by their care, who have the inspection over them.

to youth, who being willing to hear advice, and shewing a desire of being informed of what is for their good, will by this be delivered from many evils, which otherwise cannot fail of attending the resolutions of their rash and unexperienced years; and in all their undertakings, will proceed with a conduct far above their age.

adly, It is very serviceable in all states of life; because in all there are many difficulties, which are best managed and overcome by counsel; there are many advantages which may be made, and these are best laid hold of by such who make use of more heads than their own.

Lastly, There are none, even the most learned, experienced, and wise, but what are subject to oversights and mistakes in what they know; and meet many things, in which others are better skilled and more quick-sighted than themselves. Now where the temper is docile, it not only considers

what help they can have in all affairs, but likewife encourages all friends, even unalked, to give their opinion, to fore-warn, and by instances of success and miscarriages, to inform them which way to take with most fecurity.

2. The advantages are obvious enough, and I think, so great, that, I question, whether there be any tempers, who will not make use of them, if not by inclination, at

least by choice. It was a last to well a

A. There are many who will not:

There are some so self-conceited, that they cannot imagine any to know better than themselves, and hence despise all advice.

There are others, who dispute every thing that is said to them, and take it as an affront, if their judgment be questioned. Others receive all advice with a scornful smile.

Others cannot be spoken to, but they are presently moved, swell, and discover anger in their looks.

Others run into the other extreme, and instead of being angry, fall into dejection, and cry, They are unhappy, who cannot please, nor do any thing well. better do as

of Others, through jealoufy, suspect all ad-

vice and dare not follow it, for fear of some delign or one eyed mount niev to bring

Others are so morose or reserved, that either they will not be spoken to, or will not own their design.

Others are so proud, that they will not do what they know is for the best, because it is not their own thoughts, and think it beneath them to follow others.

Others are so stiff and self-willed, that they will not be put out of their way, what-

ever they fuffer.

Others are over-ruled by affection, and will hear none but those whom they like, without considering whether they are wise or no.

Others are so governed by their passions or interest, that they cannot approve of any thing that does not favour these, and to oppose them is argument enough of the wrong.

Others are so inconstant, that hearing and resolving to follow the best advice, they presently change their resolutions, uponhearing the next, that is but of another

mind.

Others hear and know the best, but through fear, persuasion, ill company, vice, sloth, love of ease, or compliance with the world, act contrary to what they know.

Others, through a certain lightness of mind or vain humour, have no regard to any thing, but as it is agreeable or difagreeable to this inclination; and therefore cannot approve advice, that is not favourable to it.

By these, and many other ways, are Christians hindered from receiving the benefit of friends and their good advice; and this feldom without their own fault; it being generally, you fee, some pride or passion, or ill humour, which is the occasion of their being deprived of this good.

2. But are not they punished for their fault?

A. Pride, moroseness, passion, and ill humour, have generally this jultice accompanying them, that they punish themselves. And, besides many others, this is one general punishment, that not bearing advice, they are deprived of it; and those friends, who observe their indiscretions, follies, and ill ways, look on with pity and filence; as thinking it to no purpose to speak to such who have not humility enough to be advised. And by this means, whatever friends they have, yet they have not the benefit of them.

2. If the injury they do themselves be so great, have they not reason to amend this ill

way, which is the occasion of it?

A. They have great reason; and therefore I cannot but with, that such Christians who observe this in themselves; that they cannot be advised of any fault, or justly reproved, but it is generally with some disturbance in them, either of pride, that swells, or of anger, that makes them peevish, or of melancholy, that dejects; would take pains in overcoming themselves, in suppressing all such inward motions; and till this be gained, to prevent these disturbances appearing in their words or looks. For fince advice and reproof are the great benefit we can make of friends; and these are particularly recommended in the Gospel, to such as are over us, as the proper means for doing us good; " Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort", 2 Tim. iv. 2. They, who do not thus endeavour to govern themselves, cannot fail of being great losers by it, by the discouragements given to those who otherwise would be willing to do them good, both for this world and the next.

2. Well, but are not some too ea'y in their temper, so as to be imposed on, and

led out of the way? yrav an aning

A. None can be too easy in receiving just reproof, or advice of their faults, or counfel from the wise and good; for this ought to be received with satisfaction and thanks.

And as for others, who are not good, or have any defign of drawing them into a share; there are very sew so weak, but they have sense enough to discern or suspect it at least; and if then they yield, this must not be called easiness of temper, but a great weakness of mind, who seeing or suspecting evil before them, will be contented to be led into it. This is almost the only case in which roughness is commendable in a Christian. At other times he is to be easy, assumed the complying, and sweet, and be as a lamb: But when evil is proposed, he ought then to put on the sion, and by an heroic anger strike terror in the proposers.

### amanamamin

#### CHAP. XLI.

of the Love of Worldly Things.

OU have proposed many christian duties, both as to what is to be followed, and what avoided; tell me now, What you think of the love of creatures, or of any thing in this world?

A. I think it a very difficult point in practice, such as requires great grace and discre-

tion in the management of it. 10 doorgan

any case?

A. Yes, in many; as between parents and children, husband and wife, &c. Any thing that is lawful, innocent, and good, may be loved.

2. Where then is the difficulty?

A. The same as in physic; a due quantity does well, but take too much of it, and it does injury; nay, in many cases, is pointed. The difficulty then is, in being moderate, and avoiding excess.

Q. Is all excess then, in the love of crea-

tures, evil? when seems has animomian and

A. Yes; but as there are different degrees of excels, so there are in the evil of it.

2. As how?

A. First, If a person be bent with an immoderate love upon what is lawful, as it may be in parents towards their children; this is so far evil, as to lessen the concern and love for God; it takes up the heart too much, it possesses the mind with too much violence; so that it has not due liberty to think of God, nor to be so solicitous for eternity as it ought to be.

gree, so as to indulge children in many indiscreet and hurtful things, rather than displease them; to connive at their faults, their prodigality, their vanity, &c. to hope all to be well, contrary to what they fee; and thus let them go on, till they are out of their reach and government. Hutwish at asda golds

adly, It may still grow to another degree, fo as to favour their children in what is evidently finful; to do what is unjust, for making provision or gaining preferment for them; to renounce conscience and faith; rather than fuffer them to be exposed to want. These, and many other evils, may be the effect of immoderate love; and what the fin of this is, Christ himself has de-1 clared; "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth fon or daughter more than' me, is not worthy of me," Matt. x. 37.

other cafes at attaitun acque of bi starabean

A. Yes; the fame may be in every thing

that is loved immoderately.

First, It diminishes the love of God, for that a Christian does not, in such case, love God with all his heart. violence de teste a

adly, If it prevails on him fo far, as to be careless in his duty, to venture what is hurtful, to be bold in the dangers of fin, to take indifcreet liberties, to hush conscience by particular opinions, to lofe respect where it is due, to cast off discipline, &c. there is still another degree of evil in it. for the fake of what he loves, transgresses the law of God, despises his precepts; lays aside, regards not, or omits duty; gives scandal to his neighbour, neglects his family, wastes his estate, ruins his health, gives ill example, makes the enemies of God blaspheme, &c. It is evident here is something loved more than God; and consequently, that such an one is not a disciple, who, in fact, has forsaken God.

Q. And this, you fay, may be in every

thing of them are that as a regulation

A. Yes, in every thing, though in itself never so indifferent, innocent, or lawful. For if it be thus in regard of such objects, where love is a duty, and according to the command of God, as in the instances already mentioned, of parents and children, husband and wife; that a Christian may, in these, arise to that excess of love, as to become guilty of forsaking God, and losing the character of Christ's disciple; how much more may this be in other things, where if any degree of love be tolerated, yet there is none commanded? It is certain, in regard of these, the excess cannot be less criminal than of the former.

2. What may these things be ? Lulan bas

A. I have already told you, All things

which are capable of being loved by man; as company, recreation, gaming, divertifements, entertainments, eating, drinking, dreffing, gain, money, eafe, fenfual fatisfactions, revenge, idleness, gossiping, honour, state, reputation, party, friends, &c. All these, with many other particulars, are capable of the excess mentioned, and may be made the occasions of departing from the commandments, and from God.

2. Then these may be loved in some

degree, though not in excess?

A. Some of them are evil, as revenge, &c. The rest being appointed or permitted by God, for the use, convenience, or help of man, fo, far they may be approved and loved, as they are ferviceable to those ends which God approves; but if the love exceeds these bounds, and satisfaction is fought in them; not now with regard to the real use and service of man, as God allows; but to gratify inclination or fense, to comply with felf-love, vanity, or the world, &c. All this love is immoderate, and as far as it becomes the occasion of neglecting any duty, or running into danger of fin, or transgreffing any commandment of God, so far in proportion it must be owned to be evil and finful. So signification of the solution o

As how, in particular?

A. I have already instanced particulars, but for more clearness, I add others.

First, A Christian may love a friend and company, as far as they are serviceable for the profitable or innocent entertainment of seasonable times; but if the love of these be so great, that for the sake or satisfaction of them, he neglects his duty, exposes himself to the dangers of sin, or breaks any commandment, such love is immoderate and sinful.

adly, A Christian may love any lawful divertisement, as far as it is serviceable for health, or for the relaxation of the mind; but if it be loved so far, that for the sake or satisfaction of any divertisement he neglects his duty to God or his family, spends or hazards unreasonably, engages in ill company, is averse to what is serious, loves to be idle, and makes his life but a change or succession of idleness, such love is immoderate and sinful.

adly, A Christian may love cloaths, as they are serviceable against cold and shame; but if this love goes so far, that with them he gratisties his own vanity, complies with an extravagant world, and for them spends unreasonably, such love is immoderate and sinful. And thus it is in all other things: And the reason is, because though it be no fault to make use of any thing created, as

far as it serves for that end for which it is ordained or permitted by God; yet to employ it beyond or contrary to that end, and to the offence of the Creator, is to pervert the order of Providence, to abuse blessings, and to turn them ungratefully against the Giver. Great discretion, therefore, and good management, is necessary in whatever we love; so as not to exceed the bounds which God has set. He that keeps within these, obeys God; but he that exceeds them, is disobedient.

## CHAP. XLII.

### Of the Love of Created Things.

2. WHAT is the great perfection of a Christian in this life?

A. The same as in the next; that is, To

2. Can a Christian thus love God, if he

loves any thing created?

A. The love of our neighbour, such as God requires of us, is an extension of the love of God, and therefore very consistent with it. But where love is not a duty, the rule is this: The nearer a Christian can

come to be indifferent as to all things in this world, the more is the foul at liberty for feeking and loving God: For the faculties of the foul being narrow, and limited in their operations, they cannot with earnestness be bent on any one thing, but by leffening their application to others. And hence it is, that worldly concerns take off the foul from the concern of heaven, by employing the thoughts, and possessing them with a folicitude which has no relation to eternity. Whence those Christians have the greatest advantage in order to love God, who are most separated from this world, or who use this world as if they did not use it; that is, without concern or folicitude for it. Hence St Paul's desire is, "I would have you be without carefulness," 1 Cor. vii. 32. that the heart may not be divided, which God demands entire to himself. shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart." For this reason, the same apostle prefers a fingle life before that of marriage. "He that is unmarried," fays he, "careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God; but he that is married, is careful for the things that belong to the world, how he may please his wife, and is divided. And the unmarried woman thinketh on the things of our Lord, how the may be holy both in body and in spirit; but she that is married, careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." And then concludes thus; "He that gives his virgin in marriage, doth well; but he that gives her not in marriage, does better," I Gor. vii. 32, 38.

fnaring, what do you say of fondness?

A. Love is a passion, and what then must I fay of fondness, which is the passion of a passion? I fay, this is still so much more injurious, as possessing the soul with greater violence, more enflaving the thoughts, increafing the folicitude of the mind, and fubjecting the heart to a fuccession of anxious and perplexing disquiets, whilst all that pleases or displeases is all upon extremes. All this is injurious to that liberty of spirit and interior calm, in which the foul ought to feek God; befides the variety of other passions that are annext to it, and the great blindness and indiscretion that attend it: And therefore it is what a Christian has reafon to be afraid of.

2 But if it be the effect of temper, and a Christian knows not how to prevent or remedy it?

A. He has so much more unhappiness to lament in himself; he has so much more

reason to keep a stricter watch upon himself; he has so much more to try his discretion and exercise his patience.

2 But what must he do?

A. The fame as with all other natural weaknesses; he ought, in prudence, to remove, or moderate it as much as he can; and what he cannot at present overcome, he must bear with patience, till endeavours and time have made it yield.

2. Do you mean this of all states?

A. Yes, of all; for where love is a duty, yet fondness is not; but is rather to be esteemed an excess, a weakness, a passion, and subject to so many inconveniences, that it must be wisdom to overcome it, and to suppress the suggestions of it till it can be overcome.

& But what do you say of it, in regard of other states?

A. I fay it is a dangerous passion?

2. But if nothing be proposed or thought on but what is innocent?

A. How many evils follow, where nothing was at first thought on but what was innocent?

. 2. Then you are not for trufting it?

A. As I would do sparks of fire among dry and combustible matter; they sometimes take fire, and sometimes not; and it is discretion not to trust them, but to put them out as soon as one can. No sort of passions ought to be trusted; for it is the nature of them to be blind and rash; and who can be secure, when he is under such conduct?

2 Then, it may be, you will not allow

of friendship?

A. Yes, if there be great discretion in the choice; otherwise it may prove the way to ruin: But, with the best choice, still the soolish part of friendship is not to be allowed, which is passion; for this cannot well be, but with mischies attending it, even where they are not proposed, foreseen, or apprehended; besides that unavoidable one of softening the soul, and bringing it to a temper unbecoming a soldier of Christ.

Q. But if a person finds this passion seiz-

ing him?

A. He ought to confider who is capable of giving the best advice, and there make timely application; for he certainly stands in need of the best, which being to be determined by particular circumstances, cannot here have place, except only in general, and that is,

First, That he confider well, and take good advice; for that this passion being

cinies take by a not amongs more and re

blind, runs confidently into irrecoverable mischiefs.

adly, That, if there be no prospect of good, he use all possible means for suppreffing it.

adly, That he remove from all occasion of feeding it, by separation, if it be in his

power.

4thly, That, if this cannot be, he induftrioufly avoid a | particular communication, and be very watchful in the government of all his fenfes. Tout single out of mointoide the

5thly, That he allow no kind of addresses or freedoms, which only ferve to increase A. Because God's will is the ra.noille paffion.

These are difficult prescriptions; but being to prevent greater difficulties, it must be reasonable to submit to them. When a tyrant threatens flavery, it is worth the pains to labour in dispossessing him, for the securing of liberty; and he that does not, must not afterwards complain of his misfortunes which he faw coming on, and would not take the pains to prevent them. A. All feptaal and carpan leaves beences

3t Peter calls upon all obehevors of a liber

each you as firangers out pilgoins, abitain from from them delites, which was against

the foot," a Pel. ii. sa. And beligabathe

lares to them. " To be comally minded is

fr

th

blind, runs confidently into arrecoverable discoverable d

# CHAP. XLIII.

# dinisary da Of a clean Heart.

## 2. WHAT do you mean by a clean heart?

2. I mean a heart that loves nothing, but according to the order and will of God; for whatever is beyond this, defiles.

Q. How do you shew this?

A. Because God's will is the measure and rule of all holiness; and therefore, as that cannot be holy which is disagreeable to the Divine will; so if it be loved, it must necessarily defile; because it carries the heart, and fixes it on that which so far departs from the rule of holiness and from God.

Le But what is it that is chiefly underflood to defile the heart, and render it un-

clean?

A. All fensual and carnal desires: Hence St Peter calls upon all believers; "I befeech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from from slessly desires, which war against the soul," I Pet. ii. 11. And St Paul declares to them, "To be carnally minded is

death. The carnal man is enmity against God! If you live after the flesh, you shall die, Rom. viii. 6, 7, 3!

A. He is always to remember what the apostle has told him, That " to be carnally minded is death;" and his falvation depending upon his avoiding whatever brings death to the foul, he is confequently to be very careful in avoiding whatever is carnal or fenfual, and thus fatally wars against the foul.

. First, He is to keep a strict watch upon his heart, so as to give no admittance to any finful defires, nor to entertain or pleafe himself with any kind of thoughts, which are contrary to that purity which the Gospel requires, and ought to be abhorred by those who hope for the bleffing promifed to the To fuch thoughts he ought clean of heart. not to open his heart, but flart with fear at the very first approach of them, as at the appearance of traitors who have a defign against his life; of monsters, which come to devour him; and of evil spirits, who, by pleasing mares, intend to draw him into hell. And this not only at thoughts, which are directly finful, but at all others which have any relation to them, and attempting mideath the equity freeze, there

th

m

is

lik

fen

the

him at a greater distance, pretend to be innocent, that they may destroy more securely, and without a suspicion of their design. Where there is not this care, there cannot

be long a clean heart.

2. He is to keep a like guard upon all his outward fenses: His eyes are to be shut against all evil objects, and to be turned from all that which invites to sin. He ought not to entertain himself with books which are either obscene, or by amorous subjects help to soften and esseminate the soul. He ought to shut his ears against all sinful discourse, and not to bear their company, who thus take upon them to act the devil's part. He ought to avoid all public shews in which such liberties are taken, as betray a notorious corruption, where they are pleasing; and cannot give satisfaction, but what must be abhorred by a clean heart.

3. He ought to put a strict watch upon his tongue, so as never to speak an immodest or unseemly word; for so St Paul gives the charge, saying, "Let it not be once named amongst you," Eph. v. 3. And this is not only to be avoided in plain terms, but likewise as to all such words, which bearing a double meaning, may be taken in an ill sense; for it being from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, there is a plain Vol. XII.

discovery of the heart not being clean; where the lips utter fuch expressions as are to prejudicial to that purity which is enjoined the followers of the Gospel. The fame care must be used in avoiding all immodest jests or songs, because all those speak what the heart is. And if it be clean, it must have a horror of all such entertainment: It must be confounded, to think how Christians, who say they love and fear God, can make that their pastime, which is fo very displeasing to him; how they can sport themselves in that, which brings death to their own fouls, and to all theirs who are pleased with hearing them. For what is this but playing with poilon, and finging one another into hell this of bas not

A like care is to be observed in making reports, or relating what has happened to others, to avoid such passages and expressions as are not agreeable to christian modesty: For though it be no participation of the guilt to relate it; yet such as are frequent in this matter, and have satisfaction in it, shew but too evidently what their heart is; besides the mischief they do by entertaining others with this silth, and giving youth (if any happen to be present) an early knowledge of this subject, which they cannot learn too late.

4. He is to be very strict in taking no

liberties with himfelf or others, which can bear the construction of this guilt. I except against nothing that is really innocent; and yet this ought not to be a plea, to justify the attempts, in any kind, of a fenfual heart; for whatever is done upon fuch a fuggeltion, will certainly be condemned, in the fight of God, of fin, however there may be nothing visible to prove the guilt of it before men. Whence I cannot but admire at what custom has made too common, and that is, the great freedom used both in words and actions, where fenfuality is rather professed than hid. For though there be no evil proposed or intended, yet while it is in compliance with an interior corruption, and to gratify a fenfual mind, there can be no excuse for it, but it must be condemned as the liberty of unbelievers, fuch as either know not, or despise, the promises made to the clean of heart.

And if such freedoms are to be thus cenfured in the aggressors; let those consider how far they partake in the guilt, who by looks, smiles, words, or other hints of carriage, give any encouragement to them; all that is so understood, is equal to the consent of words; and if the heart be consenting to it, there needs no other proof at the tribunal of Christ. Let those too consider it,

e-

n

eir

by

V-

an

ey

no

M ij

who feem to discourage it, and express their dislike; but do it in such a manner, that they plainly discover themselves not to be in earnest. What would these do, if any should attempt to take away their money? What, if their life? In these cases they would omit nothing that could possibly be a means of rescuing them from the violence, and would soon shew themselves to be in earnest. And why not so here, where the concern is very often greater than of

money or life?

Here I have told you at length, what the Christian is to do for standing against the dangers of natural corruption, for avoiding all that can defile, and for preferving a clean heart. And however the practice of Christians is such, that one would guess this to be a matter wherein God has given no precept, but left them to the liberty of their own desires; yet whoever will, or has read the New Testament, must observe there all the fins under this head, to be marked out as the fins of unbelievers, even of those who have no knowledge of God; that they are fuch as exclude them from the kingdom of heaven, and from which all the followers of the Gospel ought to be washed and purified; for that the fight of God, which they believe and hope for, can be expected only by those to whom it is promised, that is, to

the clean of heart: For "They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24.



### olv od a C H A P. XLIV.

#### Of Self-denial.

If this be the rule of a christian life, as you have hitherto declared, is there not great self-denial necessary for coming to the practice of it?

A. Yes, felf-denial is absolutely necessary.

- 2. From what head does this necessity of felf-denial arise?
- A. From the corruption of nature, which fpreading itself through all the faculties of our soul and body, inclines them all, with a fort of violence, to evil; so that if they have the liberty of following their own bent, they will all run into sin, and seek satisfaction in it.

2. How does this corruption oblige us to felf-denial?

A. Because the will and law of God, and the Gospel, are holy; and we cannot walk according to these, except we check and suppress in us all those inclinations which

M iij

carry us out of the way of this holiness, and lead us to evil a If we follow that which is just and good, we must of necessity stand against and resist that which bends us to sin.

Q. Is it thus declared in the Gospel?

A. It is by Christ himself, who thus says to his disciples; "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and sollow me," Matt. xvi. 24. And again; "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and sollow me," Mark viii. 34. Here self denial is expressly declared a necessary condition for becoming Christ's disciple.

Q. How is this to be practifed? vino and

A. By keeping a strict watch upon all the faculties of the soul, and senses of the body; and bringing them into subjection to the will of God, as often as any motions, or even inclinations, are perceived in them, contrary to the Divine will. Hence a guard is to be set upon the whole inward and outward man; all is to be kept in government; the understanding, the will, the memory, the heart, the affections, the desires, the whole list of passions, the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the tasse, the hands, the feet, &c. No liberty is to be allowed to any of them, but according to the appointments of the Divine will; all is to be kept within those

And thus is a Christian to practise what he professes, that is, to be a follower of Christ.

2. Is not this to make the life of a Chrif-

tian a very laborious life?

A. Sin has made it so, and we have no remedy but to bear the burthen of it. Since our nature, heing corrupt, is contrary to the ways of God; it must be contradicted by those who intend to walk in them. There can be no virtue where this is not done; and if no virtue, there can be no salvation: Hence all those, who, by a virtuous life, hope to prepare for a life eternal, are obliged to undertake this task of self-denial, and thus only can they satisfy the condition of following Christ, and of being where he is.

2 Can there be any comfort then in a

christian dife? dul out mach prigaride bas

A. Yes, the greatest of all comforts; in doing the will of God, in the peace of confcience, in overcoming and triumphing over sin, and in the hopes of everlasting happiness with God: These are comforts, which the world cannot give, and which those cannot understand, who know not what it is to deny themselves in obedience to Christ.

eafiness in such a life?

Ato There must be difficulties where there

is a victory to be gained by fighting. But this is no just reproach to a christian life; fince the libertine, the fenfual or worldly foul, cannot avoid meeting far greater difficulties, in the contradiction of its inclinations, in the disappointments of them, in their becoming more violent and more unfatiable, in the infinite ill confequences of a finful life, and the horror of that eternity to which it is haftening.' If all were fummed up which evil Christians suffer, even in this life, who propose the satisfaction of following their inclinations, it would foon appear that the difficulties of virtue are nothing in comparison of them, and that the self-denials of finners (though to no purpose) are ten times more than those of the most rigorous Christians. Especially, fince (whatever these fuffer, while nature is not yet fubdued) these difficulties are insensibly diminished; and being once masters of themselves, there is both comfort and eafe in relifting the remaining inclinations of fin.

2. Since things stand thus with Christians, what would you advise them to do?

A. The case is clear beyond dispute. They are to do what Christ himself has told them; they are to deny themselves; and this being his prescription, they may be assured the more they practise it, the greater advantage and comfort they will find in it.

First, As to whatever is unlawful or finful, the obligation of denying themselves is absolute; and whoever does it not, is not the servant of God, but of sin. But that they may the more effectually perform this, it must be adviseable in many other occafions to practife felf-denials; that fo they may have the more absolute command of their own will, and like foldiers, by frequent exercises, be trained up to that upon which their lives and victory depend. Hence,

adly, As often as they apprehend, or can justly suspect danger, in following inclination, it must be wildom, if not duty, to

deny themseves.

3dly, As often as they suspect their inclination to be in favour of some humour, or weakness, or passion; whatever colour of reason be otherwise pretended, it must be wisdom to deny it.

4thly, As often as inclination leads to curiofity, idleness, vanity, to the love of the world, to any thing unprofitable, it must

be wisdom to deny it.

5thly, Necessity being with discretion confidered in all the particulars of human life; it must be advitable to deny inclination, as. often as it leads to anyevident excess, though. it be not such a degree of excess as can be charged with any great fin,

Laftly, In all things indifferent which being in themselves neither good nor exil, but yet are in compliance with self-will, or to gratify the senses, it must be advisable

often to deny inclination. I to someomich

By the practice of this method, a Christian will by degrees bring his whole man into subjection, and will find it easy to deny himself in things unlawful, who has been accustomed to deny himself in things indifferent or lawful. He will more easily put on Christ, who has thus learnt to put off himself; he will be in a better disposition, at his last change, to be wholly possessed of God, who has been learning all his life to disposses himself of himself; and to do the will of God, and not his own.

Q. But as to others, who follow not this

way?

A. They who walk not in the way of the Gospel, how can they hope to come to the end of the Gospel? Hence all those Christians, who give a liberty to their inclinations; who consult nature; who favour, on all occasions, their senses and appetite; who gratify themselves in whatever is most inviting; who follow where the world, company, humour, or ill custom calls them; who seek not what is most pleasing to God, but to themselves; who study not how to deny, but how to please themselves; who

are not folicitous to overcome, but to fatisfy their inclinations: All these are nourishing a monther within their own breast, are strengthening an enemy, are increasing the disticulties of falvation, are going on in a way which neither Christ nor his Gospel shews them; and therefore must be esteemed unwise, miterable, unhappy, till they begin a new method of denying themselves; and as Christ has prescribed it, learn to become Christ's disciples.

The state of the s

0

le

ie

1.

a-

r,

e-

er

he lls

to

W

ho

id 10f not regarding what the World fays.

of F a Christian has advanced in the way of the of self-denial, may be then go on undisturbed in the way of the Gospel?

A. No, not altogether undisturbed; for the has no great trouble from within, yet

if he has no great trouble from within, yet the world will not fail in giving him difturbance and variety of discouragements.

and not approving his ways, contrary to God, or and not approving his ways, contrives 194 by

to deny, but bow to please themselves ; who

them under a fcandal, and to make those uneasy who endeavour to walk in them. do motor

2 What means does it make use of for

this end?

A. They are not to be numbered; for fruitful are ill will, envy, and malice in their inventions; but some may be more particu-

larly taken notice of:

First, The world lays virtue under an ill name, and represents the ways of the Gospel as injurious to health, as depriving its followers of all the comforts and fatisfactions of life, and obliging them to spend their days in ill-humour and melancholy.

adly, It arraigns the professors of the Gofpel of hypocrify, accusing them of vanity,

pride, and defign in all they do.

adly, It nicely observes their failings; and having discovered any, it publishes them with reproach in triumph; and by pointing at these, endeavours to persuade, that all their virtues are counterfeit.

4thly, It spreads reports of them, and by

false accusations blasts their reputation.

sthly, It arraigns them of indifcretion, where a greater charge would not be credited.

6thly, It makes them the subject of raille-

ry, and exposes them to ridicule.

ribly, It bufily enquires into all they do, and rashly censures every thing to their disadvantage. I silve forper meet an establine 8thly, It employs its ministers, who may

inform them of all that is faid of them.

gthly, it takes occasion, to their face, to flatter, applaud, and admire them, as perfons above the common rank of men, so to provoke them to say or do something indifcreetly, rashly, or presumptuously.

pulous, or unnecessary undertakers, who will not trust in infinite goodness, but in

their own works.

2. And what is a Christian to do amidst

this variety of affaults?

A. He ought not to regard whatever is faid of this kind, but go on doing his duty, without any concern or disturbance.

2. But how shall he preserve his interior

quiet, amidst all this noise?

A. By the help of his reason and faith, and of God's grace, which he ought daily to ask for his establishment.

First, He ought to consider, that the world is not to be his judge; and therefore having no dependence on it, it ought to be no concern to him, whatever it says.

adly, He must remember, that the world is at enmity with God; and therefore ought not to wonder, if it shews its malice against those that are his servants, or desire to be so.

3dly, He must consider the world as blind, inconsiderate, rash, impertinent, and even

fays, than persons of such character deserve; and who regards the reproaches of sools or mad-men?

Athly, He must remember, that God alone is to be his judge, and therefore, that his only care ought to be, in doing his will, and walking in his precepts; and that if he does this, all that the world can say, can do him no harm.

5thly, He ought to place his comfort in the peace of a good conscience, and not in the opinion or on the lips of men. Having God for his witness, who is infinitely just and good, what matter what the world says?

world dealt with Christ; that it hated him, defamed him, as a friend to publicans and sinners, as a blasphemer, as one that had a devil, and wrought wonders by the power of the devil, persecuted him, accused him salfely, and put him to death as a malefactor. And what does he say to his followers? "If the world hates you, ye know it hated me before it hated you: If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you", Jo. xv. 18. And again; "The disciple is not above his mas-

eanier lat

enough for the disciple, that he be as his master; and the servant, as his Lord: If they have called the matter of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his houshold", Matt. x. 24. Is not here motive enough to give courage and patience under all the slanders and provocations of the world?

Lastly, He ought to consider the same doctrine and the practice of it in St Paul: Requiring all the followers of Christ, to " approve themselves, in much patience, in afflictions, by long suffering, by honour and difbonour, by evil report and good report : As deceivers, and yet true", 2 Cor. vi. 4. If this be the rule, then what ought a Christian to do, but with patience, interior quiet, and even with joy, bear all the calumnies and attempts of the world, and go on steady in the practice of the Gospel, and in obedience to the will of God, waiting till God shall call him, who being witness and judge of his whole life, will reward him, not according to the censures of men, but according the world, the world & thurt bns soifug ot

an not value his reputation?

A. Let him be but faithful in his duties to God and man, and he need not doubt.

it of

e d

but the good and the wife will have a true value for him, and speak well of him. And as for others, who are not good or wise, he ought not to be concerned, whatever they say or think of him.

2. Is not this, to lay aside the concern

for his good name ? has some to de de la lance

A. No, it is prescribing the best method for gaining reputation; which is by folid virtue, by fincerity, and goodness. In this way he may be careful of preferving a good name, but yet without folicitude; for if he comes to be fo nice in this point, that he will bear nothing to be faid to his difadvantage, but it presently puts him into a distur-bance, and nothing will satisfy, but enquiring after the author of fuch report; this betrays a weakness, and by this excessive concern, instead of maintaining his reputation, he very much lessens it: Since whoever ob-ferves it, must have a meaner opinion of him, upon this account. To be moved with passion against contemptible things, shews a weakness of judgment, a want of discretion, and of a generous mind; and to be folicitous about trifles, argues the same infirmities. He, then, that has a value for his reputation, must not shew much concern at fuch reports, which deferve rather to be despifed; and if this be discretion, it is virtue too.

but the good and the wife will have a true

as for others, who are not good or wife, he

# c HAP. XLVI.

Of Scandal, or Offence taken at what we Jay

It was concluded, in the last chapter, that a Christian ought not to value what the world says of him, nor be over solicitous in the matter of reports, in which he is named: I ask now, if another be scandalised, or takes offence at what he has said or done; whether the Christian, in this case, ought to be concerned, and endeavour to remove the scandal, and so consult his own.

good name?

A. If he has given scandal by any sinful extravagance or disorder, he is certainly obliged, not only to make his peace with God by a sincere repentance, in such a manner as the Gospel directs; but likewise, by a remarkable exemplarity of life (if not in words too) to acknowledge the folly of his past errors; so to take off the scandal he has given, and make the best reparation he is able, for the injury he has done to the cause of virtue and the religion he professes, by his former ex-

travagance. Thus the apostle prescribes: "As you have yielded your members to ferve uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity; so now yield your members to serve justice (or righteoufness) unto fanctification", Rom. vi. 19. And what is this, but to demand of repenting finners, that they be folicitous to do as much service to righteousness by their good example, as they have done injury to it, by their fcandals and wickedness? And though there be no allowance for vanity, yet thus may Christians. recover the reputation they had loft, by letting their light fo shine before men, that God may be now glorified in what they do; as before they were the occasion of his holy. name being blasphemed.

Q. But what must he do, if scandal is ta-

ken, without just cause for it?

A. If persons take offence, because of malice or envy, which is in their hearts, it may be passed by, as not deserving to be taken notice of: But if it be occasioned by a tender or weak conscience, it deserves compassion, and it must be a part of charity to remove the offence, by giving them some better light into the thing.

2 Then you are not for securing reputation against malicious or envious tongues?

A. This cannot well be, but by doing ill;

fince as long as a Christian does well, they will discharge their venim against him.

2 Is a Christian to omit the doing a good action, if he apprehends, that some, through a faulty indisposition of mind, will take offence at it?

A. Christ did not omit healing on the Sabbath, though he knew the Pharifees would be scandalized at it. And he often conversed with finners, for doing them good, though he was fensible the Pharisees would hence take occasion of scandal.

2. Then a Christian needs not to be concerned at fuch feandals?

A. Not fo, as to omit any duty or the doing a charity to fuch as want it; but yet he would do well to be fo concerned, as to let them fee, there is no just reason for being offended at what he has done.

2. How is he to do this?

t

of

it

a-

n-

to. ne

tae

ill;

A. As Christ did it; who knowing the scandal to be very unjust, which the Pharifees had taken, upon his healing on the Sab. bath, yet shewed so much charity to their weakness, as by plausible arguments, and fuch as were most proportioned to their indisposition, to let them see, that he had good reason for what he did; and that they had none for being offended at him. This fame method, it must be advisable for a Christian to take in case of the most unjust scandals.

2. What is the good in doing thus?

A. There is a manifold good in it:

First, It is doing right to reason, justice, or truth, in endeavouring to remove such mistakes as are prejudicial to it. For such endeavours are always good; and may sometimes prove so effectual, as to cure the

malignity, or moderate it.

adly, It is compassion to the parties offended, to endeavour to make them sensible of their injustice. And when a Christian shews that he does not despise, but has regard to their judgments or opinions, so as not willingly to give them offence; it may, very likely, either gain their favour, or make them less enemies.

3dly, The passing by unjust scandals is often the effect of some secret pride, in the

contempt of others judgments.

when a Christian, seeing neighbours in the wrong, is not concerned to help them. The more they are unjust in judgments, the greater is the indisposition of their minds; and the greater their infirmity is, the more worthy they are of compassion.

1

h

tl

tl

5thly, It is sometimes an effect of sloth; when a Christian observing others offended at

what he does, will not take the pains to inform fuch persons of the motives and reasonableness of his actions; but to save himself this trouble, leaves them under the injustice of

their own thoughts.

Hence I think, that although malicious and all kinds of unjust scandals, in them-felves, deserve nothing, but to be despised; yet still, in compassion to those who take such scandals, it is a good Christian's part to use the best endeavours, that circumstances will allow, for shewing the reasonable-ness of whatever is pretended to be the occasion of such scandals.

2. But what fay you of indifferent things; if some, not through any degree of malice, but through weakness only, are likely to

take offence at them?

A. St Paul has answered this, who gives great cautions to the faithful, not to do any thing which may be an offence to the weak; and to make them more careful in this point, he declares of himself, That if any brother should be scandalised at his eating of slesh, he would eat no slesh as long as the world stands, Rom. viii. 13.

Q. Why does he lay fo great weight on

this?

ie

ne

he

he

S;

re

h;

at

A. Because, he says, this is sinning against the brethren, and wounding against their weak consciences; and whoever does this, he says, fins against Christ, v. 12.

2. What is the practice of this doctrine

of the apostle?

A. That Christians, in what they do, are not only to be convinced within their own consciences, that the thing is innocent and lawful; but, are likewife to enquire, whether it be likely to wound the consciences of the weak or ignorant, in their being scandalized at it. And if they have reason to apprehend that fuch will be scandalized; the innocence of the thing is not fufficient warrant to justify their proceeding, but they must forbear for their fakes, who are fo weak. This condescendence is what charity demands; and he, who will not deny himself, upon this account, but follow his inclination, though it be only for an inconfiderable diversion, without valuing the scandal that will be taken, feems to forget the price Christ has paid for fouls; and thus not having due regard to his weak neighbour, he has it not for himself. Say not then the thing is lawful; for this is not enough. Iruction the subject will bear.

A: By laying it to inconfiderateness, to initaken conference, to falle seetl, to want

II

d

U

11

00

1

weak confeiences; and whoever does this

Of Brandal of Offener &c.

## CHAP. XLVII.

We are not to approve the scandalous Actions of others.

2. HOW are we to behave ourselves, or discourse, with regard to the scandalous actions which others have done?

A. Charity directs us to put the most favourable construction on the parties concerned; and justice obliges us to disapprove and heartily condemn the evil that is done.

Q. How are we to excuse the parties con-

cerned?

17.

ev

fo

ri-

eny

his

on-

can-

the

thus

igh.

not

not

A. As juries are directed to do, where there is not an evidence of the charge, Favendum est reo; they must incline to the most favourable construction. Now since in many scandalous evils, there are several motives upon which they may have been done; if we have no evidence of the true one, it must be charity to put the best construction the subject will bear.

2. As how?

A. By laying it to inconfiderateness, to mistaken conscience, to false zeal, to want

of fore-fight, to a blind submission, to desperate circumstances, to great provocations, to the knavery of few imposing upon many, to rash heats, to weakness, to disorder of brain, to things being carried beyond defign, &c.

2. And are not all these evil?

A. The greatest part of them are; but yet not coming up to that degree of evil, which is in malice and design, or in deliberate wickedness; it is a favourable construction to expound facts thus, and what charity will plead for, when there is no evidence of malice in the case.

2. But if there be evidence of malice?

A. Then justice must take place, and the fact must be owned to be what it is. And charity has then no other part, but to pity those who were so wicked, and to befeech God to support all faithful fouls against fuch temptations.

2. But if the fact or wickedness has been

done by one of your own party?

A. If it has been so; can you think it reasonable for the apostles to defend the treachery of Judas, because he was one of their faith and company? No; if the fact be really evil, it ought not to be defended, whoever have been actors in it, though our best friends, though our parents or teachers. Q. Why

01

A. Because the thing being really scandalous, it must be a scandal to defend it; and to approve it in discourse, is to partake in the guilt.

2. But will not this be a great blemish and discredit to your party, to own the

wickedness?

d

ty ch

ıft

en

it

the

of

be

ed,

our

ers.

hy

A. It will be a much greater to undertake to defend it; fince this argues a profession of evil principles, which is worse than the worst of facts.

2. Then you would have evil owned to be evil, whoever have been the contrivers, or promoters, or actors in it?

A. I would fo; for thus justice requires; and to do otherwise, is to espouse an unjust

2. Can you yourself do thus, in cases where your church feems concerned?

A. Yes, I can do it heartily, whoever, or

whatever cause, be concerned in it.

2. As in the cases of massacres; of the murder of princes and others; with variety of treasons, rebellions, and such like contrivances?

A. Yes, in all these I can, and do readily own the evil of them; as much as in any other like barbarities which have been managed by any other people, whether Chris-Vol. XII.

294

tians or Heathens. And I cannot apprehend where should be the difficulty in owning it, having so good authority for it.

Q. What authority do you mean?

A. I mean the authority of holy scripture, which declaring that God had made choice of a peculiar people, makes no difficulty of owning both the national crimes of that his chosen people, and likewise the crimes of fuch particular persons as he had signalized among them with prerogatives above the rest. Are not there the fins of the patriarchs, of Moses, of Aaron, of the Israelites, of Saul, of David, of Sampson, of Solomon, &c. in particular recorded to all generations of believers? Are not the failings again of the apostles fet down in the New Testament? Their want of understanding, their want of faith, Peter's denying his master with repeated oaths, all forfaking him in time of danger, &c. And what a large lift of disorders and sins may be gathered out of St Paul's epiftles, which he owns in the believers of his time? Why then should Christians now have a difficulty in owning the failing or crimes of their brethren or fellowmembers, at this or any other time committed by them? I fee no reason for making the difficulty; and therefore, as I declare my abhorrence of the crimes of the Ifraelites,

n

g

h

he

th

of Aaron, and of David, though I know them to have been the chosen people and in fervants of God; fo now I do the fame, in ad detesting all those barbarities that have been ai fince committed by those who were in communion with the true church of Christ.

2. Is not this a reflection upon the church?

A. It is certainly a very great scandal upon the members of it: But still truth must be owned; and to deny this, would be a greater scandal.

2. But does not this call the truth of the

church in question?

r

n

ft of

eif-

he

Wm-

ing

are

tes,

A. The scripture does not favour any such construction; since it owns the Israelites to have been still the people of God, notwithstanding the many scandalous crimes amongst them; and that though the governors, the princes, and priefts, and people of the Jewish church, had fallen under the guilt of the most crying fins, yet that it was the true church of God; and Christ. himself commands the pastors of it to be heard, even at the time while he condemns: them of many finful practices, Matt. xxiii.

2. How is this to be reconciled, of following those who go out of the way?

A. Christ himself has reconciled it in the by ath di Moos of the crimes

chapter now mentioned, where speaking to the Jewish people concerning the Scribes and Pharisees who sat in the chair of Moses, he gives them this command; "All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do ye not after their works." Which is, in plain terms, to tell the people, that though the works of their pastors were evil, yet they were still bound to hear their doctrine, and follow it; and that the wickedness of their pastors was not sufficient warrant for their separating or withdrawing their obedience from them.

2. Does not this feem something strange?

A. It must be owned that such pastors are not edifying, and many woes are pronounced against them. But still it cannot be strange, what is in all the institutions of God which are ordained for our government. We have many such ordinances, as of parents, masters, magistrates, governors, &c. Now if these prove very wicked, as it often happens, and by scandalous practices give public offence; yet the ordinance of God is not, upon this, dissolved; we are still to own our subjection, and to obey. For government is not made to depend on the uncertainty of the personal virtue of those in power; it is settled on more fixt principles; if it were not, how soon would

all government be loft, and confusion take its place? If this be true, then it cannot be furprising to find it so in the church. The church of Christ is a spiritual government, of divine indistitution; and the pastors of it, by God's own ordinance, being commanded to teach, and the people to hear and believe; this order is to be observed, and has not a dependence on the personal virtue of the pastors. If then any of its pastors or people do what is fcandalous, they are to answer for their own sins; but the ordinance of God is not made void; but as God commanded, fo it must be done; the pastors of the church are still to teach, and the people are still to hear, and be taught by them. Thus, amidst all personal disorders, the ordinance of God stands good; government is supported and perpetuated, and confusion kept out.

selfapon de la mesa prove very wirked, as it

to something and are the part to the of

the are gone this difficed we are

godo er Bra, noisa dia al a dife sa the

For government of not, made to depend on

de for resigning of the perional variety of

S

of

re

y.

n

of

xt

ild

arole in covere the fartled on more like

-legmos . mi

God's pro

Lion is he to build his hope in 688 ? e belo of a firm faith: For have

coodnels, in mercy

#### CHAP. XLVIII.

#### Of entire Confidence in God.

2. TOU have declared many great duties of a Christian: Now I defire to know whether a Christian, of himself, is able to fatisfy them?

A. No, he is not; he is poor, miserable, necessitous, and not sufficient of himself to think a good thought, much less to accom-

plish what he thinks, 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Is not this enough to draw a Christian into despair, to see himself under the obligation of many great duties, and wholly incapable of performing them; and yet this to be one condition of his being eternally

who, by the ments of his lacred par yqqad lot A. It is enough to make him despair of himself, and this is what he ought to do; For if a man thinks himself to be some worthing, when he is nothing, he deceiveth bimfelf," Gal. vi. 3. But still while a Chrisow tian despairs of himself, he may be full of were enemies, we were reconciled.sqodsod

gaind 2. In whom is this hope to be? A. In God alone.

2. How is he to build his hope in God? A. By the help of a firm faith: For having a firm faith of God being infinite in power, in goodness, in mercy, in compasfion; and having a like faith of God's promiles made to man, of helping, strengthening, supporting, enabling, comforting, leading, preserving, defending those that call upon him; and that God is faithful to his promifes: Upon this infinite power and goodness, thus engaged to his assistance, he builds his hope; having now a firm confidence, that although of himself he can do nothing, yet, through God, he shall be able to do all things: " Our fufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. iil. 5. Main and university

2 But how can man, being through fin an enemy to God, and upon this account unworthy of all mercy, hope to partake of incapable of peril

the Divine goodness?

lu-

ire

is

le,

to

m.

ian

bli.

olly

this

ally

pair

do;

me.

reth

rif.

l of

A. Through the mediation of Christ, who, by the merits of his facred passion, blotted out the hand-writing that was against us. Whence we, who were "Strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, now are made nigh by the blood of Christ; for he is our peace, Eph. ii. 12. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Much more, being

N iv

reconciled, we shall be saved by his life,"
Rom. v. 10. Here then is the perfection of all our hopes; that having infinite goodness before us, of which our sins render us unworthy, we are reconciled by the blood of Christ; and by the mediation of his passion, have considence of obtaining all we want.

2. Our whole confidence then is to be in

Christ?

A. Yes, it is: So that we can hope to obtain nothing of the Father, but through the merits of his only Son Christ Jesus, bleffed for evermore. Christ then is the " one Mediator between God and man," 1 Tim. ii. 5, by whom our peace is made, and we are reconciled to God. He is our Advocate with the Father, and the propitiation for our fins," I John ii. 1, and it is only through the ranfom he paid, upon which we can hope for mercy. He has reason therefore to call all to him; " Come unto me all you that labour:" For certainly those that do not come to him, those that do not feek and ask through him, those that do not rest with an entire confidence in him, can have no part in the redemption he wrought, and must therefore perish in their fins.

Q. Well, but is our confidence to be so in Christ, that we may rest entirely in what he has done and suffered for us, without do-

ing any thing ourselves?

A. No, not in this sense; for Christ hunfelf has recommended many great duties to us; of watching and praying, and striving to enter at the narrow gate; of being humble, and meek, and merciful, and forgiving injuries, and loving one another; and being patient under reproaches, falle accufations, and perfecutions; of denying ourselves, and taking up our cross, and giving an account of our talents and of our stewardship; of giving alms; of being always prepared with oil in our lamps; of loving our enemies; of feeking first the kingdom of God, &c. And is not the whole New Teftament full of the like injunctions? Whence it is very obvious that Christ did not suffer for our redemption, as to exempt us from all fuffering, and to obtain for us the privilege of an idle, unthinking life. No, he has left us under the charge of many duties; fo that a christian life is to be a life of watchfulnels and folicitude; of labour and perpetual fighting; we are to work out our falvation with fear and trembling: And as for fuffering, you fee it is Christ himself calls us to take up our crofs; and St Peter fays, " Christ-fuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps," I Pet. i. 21. Hence you fee we have a great deal to do and to fuffer. one of the test of the to the country and the

n

0

t

ot

in

t,

So

at

0-

2. How then are we to rest with confidence in Christ, if so much remains for us to do and fuffer? Is no brage aw

A. Our confidence is to be thus in Christ: that whatever we do or fuffer, can find no acceptance or reward with God, but through Christ; and that it must be through him alone we can hope for grace, for doing what is our duty, and for fuffering with patience, as he requires. So that both for grace to do well, and for God to have a regard to what we do, all our dependence must be in Chrift

2. But is it not to lessen our dependence

on Christ, if we do any thing ourselves?

A. Our dependence on Christ is not solid, and according to the Gospel, if we do not what he requires of us; without this, all our hope is fantastic, and nothing better than presumption. It is a like presumption, If we trust in our own works, and confide in what we do, without the influence and merits of Christ. And then only is our hope a christian hope, when we are faithful in every duty; and having done all we can, then confide in Christ, that through the merits of his passion, God will have regard to what we do.

Q. Then it is not forfaking Christ, to give alms, to pour forth tears for our fins, to defire others to pray for us, to use endea-

L

yours for bringing our body into subjection

to the spirit and to the law of God?

A. If we depend on any of these endeavours, as coming from ourselves, and as of themselves being valuable with God, and capable of moving him to mercy; in so doing we forsake Christ, and take off our dependence from him. But if we use all kind of endeavours, and, having done all, think ourselves unprofitable servants; if we believe all we can do to be nothing, without God's blessing; and that all we do is of no value, but through Christ; then by such endeavours we do not forsake Christ, but express our dependence on him.

And is it thus when we defire others to pray for us; for fince Christ is our Advocate to the Father, is it not injurious to this his mercy, to ask others to become our advocates? And fince he says to all, "Come to me," how can we answer it to go to any body else, as those do who ask others to

pray for them?

0

11

15

n,

de

há

pe

in

an,

ne-

to

ins,

lea-

A. The practice of St Paul, in desiring so many to pray for him, as he does in his epistles, shews it not to be injurious to the Mediatorship of Christ. We ourselves pray that through Christ we may obtain mercusthis is going to Christ. We desire our sellow members to join in prayer with us

to delik Alers to pray for us to ule endea

that through Christ we may obtain mercy; this is a charity we can perform for one another; and while it only increases the number of petitioners, it is not forsaking Christ, nor going to others, but more and more going to him. Thus it is, whether we desire this charity of the just or unjust, of saints or sinners; for it being no more than calling in others to go with us to Christ, it cannot be interpreted as going to others, or as not coming to him; while all our considence is in him, and we confess that we can obtain nothing, but through the mediation of his passion.

### Telescolo C.H.A.P. XLIX.

Of Serving God in Spirit and in Truth.

A. As he himself requires, that is, in spirit and truth."

2 What is it to ferve God " in spirit

and truth?" to andmun and mort whem

A. To ferve him "in spirit," is to serve him with our heart, mind, and understanding; employing them all in the adoration and homage we give him, in the thanks

which we render him, and in all the duties, we perform in obedience to his facred will.

Q. What is it to ferve him in truth? done

A. It is to ferve him, not according to our own imagination, fancy, or private reason, but according to his own holy ordinance; for he being truth, and not we, we cannot worship him in truth, if we do not worship him according to his own appointment.

2. Is there any other meaning of those

words, of ferving God in truth.

rit

nd-

ion

nks

A. Yes, to serve God in truth, signifies, That whatever we perform or profess outwardly, in the service of God, ought to proceed from, and be according to the real sentiments of our hearts. Hence the Christian is obliged to have a strict union and communication between the outward and inward man, in all things, but more especially in all that belongs to the worship and service of God: For if the lips, words, or knees, are not moved by the heart, there is not truth in such worship; it is serving God with a lie, and not in truth.

Q. Does not this explication exclude many from the number of God's fervants, who pretend to be his fervants; and likewife many exercises from being religious acts, which are generally esteemed as such

A. It does so: For certainly, according to this rule, none of those Christians can be

esteemed the servants of God, who professing a faith in Christ, and being members of his church, and being present at the public worship of God, and performing many other acts of religion, are not renewing in the inward man, but live under the guilt of wilful sin; and in their hearts follow the corrupt inclinations of the natural man.

2. Why are not these the servants of

God ?

A. Because these do not serve him in spirit and in truth: They make a profession of being his servants and performing some outward actions; but their heart is far from him. Now in this there is neither spirit nor truth, since the heart gives the lie to all that is done.

Q. Is it nothing then to believe in Christ,

and to be a member of his church?

A. Yes there is very much in this, if the faith be a living faith working by charity. But without this, a true faith may be of no more advantage than it is in the devils, who "Believe and tremble," Jam. iii. 9. Hear what St Paul fays, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy," Gal. vi. 15.

. What does this prove ? This sail and

A. That no external communion, out-

ward profession, action, or ceremony avails, if a person does not become a new creature in Christ, if he does not walk according to the spirit; if he does not with all his heart love God, keep his commandments, and sincerely from his heart endeavour to do his will. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," 2 Cor. v. 17. For this only is to serve God in spirit and in truth. And the same is to be understood of all acts of religion or devotion.

Q. How is it to be understood, as to

thefe?

A. That they are nothing but so much pageantry, empty figns or shadows of religion, if they do not proceed from a heart truly possessed with all those sentiments, which are outwardly expressed in words or actions. Hence, that the recital or number of prayers, the profession of repentance, the bending of the knees, the observation of fasts, the abstaining from slesh, or any other outward act of religion or ceremony, cannot. be acceptable to God, except they are the effect of the inward motion of the heart. which feeking, honouring, or adoring God, expresses itself in those outward actions, and gives life to them. Without this inward life of the spirit, the recital of prayers is no more than the religion of a parrot, and a Christian

on his knees, is nothing better than a statue carved in that posture: And the same of all outward acts; for if they proceed not from the heart, they are lies, and cannot therefore be the service of God in truth.

Q. Then I see, you confine the whole service of God to the heart, and so evacuate all outward worship and religious ceremonies?

A. I say there is no true worship or service of God, which is not from the heart.

2. But is outward worship to be appro-

ved ?

A. If it comes from the heart, it cannot be disapproved; since body and soul being equally the creatures of God, and equally depending on him, it must be commendable to worship God with both, though the outward can be nothing of itself, but as it is the effect of the inward affection of the heart.

Q. Does the scripture give authority to outward worship and the use of external ce-

remonies?

A. Let us confider the New Testament: In it we find first, many of those who came to Christ, "Fell down at his feet and worshipped him:" As Jairus, Matt. ix. 18. Mark v. 22. Luke viii. 41. And having their petitions granted, it shews what they did to have been acceptable to Christ. 2diy, Christ himself describing the publican at

t

prayer, and for prevailing with God, as to obtain pardon of his fins, and return home justified, fays in particular, that is He flood afar off, that he would not lift up fo much as his eyes to heaven, and that he struck his breast;" here are three external actions remarked in his humiliation to God, Luke xviii. 13. 3dly, Christ teaching his apostles and followers to pray, framed for them a form of prayer to be faid with the lips, which is an external action. And when in the garden, he himself prayed to his Father, "He kneeled down and prayed," Luke xxii. 41, or as St Mark has it, " He fell on the ground and prayed," Mark xiv. 35. 4thly, The same is related of the apostles; "Stephen kneeled down and cried with a loud voice," Acts vii. 60. "St Peter kneeled down and prayed, and turning him to the body, faid, Tabitha, arife," Alls ix. 40. "St Paul kneeled down, and prayed with them all", Acts xx. 36.

t-

ne

to

e-

it:

me

or.

18.

hey

dly,

at

Again, Christ, in raising Lazarus to life, "Groaned in himself, lifted up his eyes," and prayed in words; and when he had spoken, "he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth," John xi. 38, 41, 43. In helping the deaf and dumb man, "Christ took him aside from the multitude, put his singers into his ears, and he spit and touched his

on his knees, is nothing better than a statue carved in that posture: And the same of all outward acts; for if they proceed not from the heart, they are lies, and cannot therefore be the service of God in truth.

Q. Then I fee, you confine the whole fervice of God to the heart, and so evacuate all outward worship and religious ceremonies?

A. I say there is no true worship or service of God, which is not from the heart.

2. But is outward worship to be appro-

A. If it comes from the heart, it cannot be disapproved; since body and soul being equally the creatures of God, and equally depending on him, it must be commendable to worship God with both, though the outward can be nothing of itself, but as it is the effect of the inward affection of the heart.

Q. Does the scripture give authority to outward worship and the use of external ce-

remonies?

A. Let us confider the New Testament: In it we find first, many of those who came to Christ, "Fell down at his feet and worshipped him:" As Jairus, Matt. ix. 18. Mark v. 22. Luke viii. 41. And having their petitions granted, it shews what they did to have been acceptable to Christ. 2diy, Christ himself describing the publican at

prayer, and fo prevailing with God, as to obtain pardon of his fins, and return home justified, fays in particular, that is He stood afar off, that he would not lift up fo much as his eyes to heaven, and that he ftruck his breaft;" here are three external actions remarked in his humiliation to God, Luke xviii. 13. 3dly, Christ teaching his apostles and followers to pray, framed for them a form of prayer to be faid with the lips, which is an external action. And when in the garden, he himself prayed to his Father, "He kneeled down and prayed," Luke xxii. 41, or as St Mark has it, " He fell on the ground and prayed," Mark xiv. 35. 4thly, The fame is related of the apostles; "Stephen kneeled down and cried with a loud voice," Acts vii. 60. "St Peter kneeled down and prayed, and turning him to the body, faid, Tabitha, arife," Acts ix. 40. "St Paul kneeled down, and prayed with them all", Acts xx. 36.

Again, Christ, in raising Lazarus to life, "Groaned in himself, listed up his eyes," and prayed in words; and when he had spoken, "he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth," John xi. 38, 41, 43. In helping the deaf and dumb man, "Christ took him aside from the multitude, put his singers into his ears, and he spit and touched his

r-

8.
ag

ly,

at

tongue; and looking up to heaven, he fighed, and said unto him, Ephphetha," Mark vii. 33. "The apostles anointed with oil many that were fick, and healed them," Mark vi. 13. Christ ordained baptism with water: When he fent his apostles and gave them the full power belonging to their charge, "He faid to them, Peace be unto you,and when he had faid this, he breathed on them, and faith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 21, 22. In the Acts of the Apostles, when the Holy Ghost is to be communicated to the faithful, when they are sent to preach, the outward action is used of the imposition of hands, they laid their bands upon them. Again, the Lord's Supper, which is the memorial of Christ's pasfion, and the means of communicating to worthy receivers the greatest blessings, is an external institution; and the outward action of receiving it, is a divine institution. Last. ly, The great facrifice of our redemption was likewise an outward action.

In these and many other instances of the New Testament is outward worship, and many external ceremonies approved; which a proceeding from a good heart, or for the signification of them, must be allowed from the practice of Christ and his apostles. The heart is certainly the principal worshipper of

God, and though what is external, be not of itself necessary, yet having the approbation of Christ and his apostles, this is enough to recommend it to their followers.

#### なるのでのこのでのできることできる

n e,

on he

Ets

to

beir

up-

pal.

g to

s an

Tion

Last.

otion

f the

ma

ch a

r the

from

Th

per o

### ed av avisosa C H A P. L.

and we exclude had sold this, he, breathed on

Of avoiding all Superstition.

La WHAT do you mean by supersti-

A. I mean a kind of worship or vain observation, injurious to the worship due to God, and to the dependence we are bound to have on him.

Let How many kinds of superstitions are there?

A. Too many to be numbered, but especially five, to which all others may be reduced:

The first is in worship, by giving to any creature whatever, the honour due to God, or more honour than is due to it; as those do, who worship any idol or image as God, or as having any divinity or power in them, whereby they can hear or help those who

make their address, or thus give honour to them 2dly, As those do, who acknowledge some supernatural excellency in things, in which it is not, and accordingly shew a religious respect to them, as in false martyrs and prophets, and counterfeit relics.

2. Is all honour given to creatures super-

stitious?

A. No, it is not: We are commanded to honour our parents and magistrates; servants are required to "count their own masters worthy of all honour," I Tim. vi.

1. And it is a general injunction, "Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour," Rom. xiii. 7. There is an honour therefore by God's appointment, due to creatures; but they are not to be honoured as God, nor with God's honour.

2. May a holy honour be given to any

creature?

A. If there be just grounds to believe them holy, then a holy respect or honour may be given them. So God commanded Moses; "Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where on thou standest, is holy ground," Exad. iii.

5. The same command is given to Joshua, Josh. v. 15. Thus holy places, as churches, may be honoured, the bible, holy vessels,

m

and holy men, "Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good," Rom. ii. 10. And whatever else has any eminent relation to God or his service. All these ought to be honoured as things belonging to God, but not as God.

2. How may fuch honour be expressed

outwardly?

**i**-

m

ur

to

ed

ny

eve

our.

ded

thy

ere-

1. 111.

Thua,

ches,

ffels,

A. There is no outward expression of honour, but is used both to God and creatures: Kings are ferved on the knee; petitions are made to them on the knee. We bow to one another, as we do to God: So we pull off our hats; and in scripture to bow with the face to the ground, that is, to prostrate, are used not only to God, but also to men; as it is likewise, in a solemn assembly, where the whole congregation bleffing the Lord God of their Fathers, " Bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the King," 1 Chron. xxix. 20. Thus in the most solemn and religious worship, God and the king are honoured with the fame putward expression by the congregation, as he same word is used to signify both.

2. How then are they diftinguished?

A. You see in these actions, they are not outwardly distinguished, and therefore it nust be in the heart; according to the maxim, honor est in honorante. The congrega-

tion bowing down their heads to God to worship him as their God, it is a divine worship, and it must be idolatry to do so to any creature: And bowing down their heads to the king to worship or reverence him, as their king, it is human honour, and infinitely inferior to that which was given to God; the outward action being the same, the difference is in the heart, which is known to God.

2. Is there any other superstition injuri-

ous to the worship of God?

A. There is, as to make use of any words, writing, characters, gestures, actions, or any kind of form or sign, and to expect from them some effect, which has no connection with them, either by natural power or the ordinance or authority of God. For such effect being not from nature or from God, it must be from the devil, applying natural causes, or in virtue of some compact, though unknown to the parties. Now all this is injurious to the worship of God, because it is a dependence upon the devil, and having considence in him, which is a kind of worship.

u

fc

st

ur th

av

ivi

Det

on

Q. Is this superstition practised?

A. It is too much, especially in cures, when either upon using certain words or characters, health is promised, or upon

doing fuch things as have no connection with the effect. Many of these practices have been delivered from our heathenish ancestors, and are mentioned by the primitive fathers above a thousand years ago, as heathenish practices, unworthy of Christians, and fo carefully to be avoided, that they fay, it is our duty rather to suffer all extremities of pain and fickness, than seek remedy by fuch unwarrantable means, which can be interpreted no less than going to the devil for help.

2 What other kind of superstition is

here?

T 10

m

ng

m-

WC

od, vil,

is a

ires,

5 01

upon

A. To make use of signs and observations, for knowing or foretelling things to come, or fecrets, which have no dependence on, or connection with fuch figns and blervations. Many ways there are of this uperstition, as in consulting cunning men, for the discovery of thieves) fortune-tellers, strologers, magicians, &c. as likewise in urning the sive or the key, with variety of ther such expedients. These practices ave been often condemned by church and ivil laws, as they are likewise in scripture, Deut. xviii. 9.

2. What is the third kind of supersti-

on?

A. In making vain observations, andcer-

tainly expeding an effect, which has ho connection with them. As in using some particular actions, ceremonies, or prayers, or watching on fuch or fuch nights? In observing the noise of flight of birds, dreams, days, the number of persons, the falling of falr, falling in a church-yard, with many other trifling accidents: In using holy things, and even prayers, but with such ceremonies and numbers necessarily prescribed, as God has never authorifed. Many other ways there are prescribed, both for knowledge, curiofity, and health, with a certain promise of the effect defired, though without any connection with them of nature or divine appointment, and must be all ranged under this head, as unlawful.

Q. Can the use of these be esteemed very

no so hum aid l

finful?

A. Ignorance, inadvertency, or want of reflection, may lessen much the guilt; but otherwise, they must be esteemed great fins; especially if we take the character of them from St Augustin and other fathers, who fay, that by these sins is made void the Sacrament of baptism, a Christian becomes pagan and facrilegious; and if not amended by a fincere repentance, the punishment of them must be to burn with devils. THE TORDING SOME

2. What

Q. What is the fourth kind of supersition?

A. To do things by art magic, in which the effect depends on some known or implicit compact with the devil. The fifth kind is like this, such as is used by witches and wizards, both mentioned, Deut. xviii. 10, 11. who upon using certain signs, have the devil concurring with them, for doing some injury to their neighbours in goods, body, or mind. All these practices are called in scripture the abominations of the heathens, and are declared an abomination to God. Ib.

Q. Are there not many natural causes which have wonderful effects, above all credit, except with those, who have seen the experience of them. And are not the improvements of arts such, as to unskilful persons may give the suf-

picion of compacts with the devil?

2.

all

ry

of

but

as;

em

who

Sa-

mes

ded t of

Vhat

A. This must be owned, and therefore in the extraordinary effects of art or nature, it is enough to depend upon the information of those, who understand them, and there needs be no jealousy of superstition. But however, these wonderful effects must not be a plea for those many practices and observations, in which the case is too evident, that either they are useless, and insignificant trisles, or if they are attended with the proposed effects, it must be by some unwarrantable means; since neither art nor nature can Vol. XII.

have any concurrence in them. Those who by education or custom, are fond of such practices, are glad to take shelter in any defence, but this will not justify here, where the prohibition is so severe, and the plea is a presumption, which if allowed as good, will justify the worst of superstitions. In doubtful things of this nature, the safer side is much the best; and to act with a doubting conscience, cannot but be injurious to its peace, as well as to God.

Their were line anomy much of the hear hear

#### 

## Of Observing Days.

Q. IS it a superstition to observe days; because this is set down under this head in the

foregoing Chapter. All both bills as aliquel of

A. There is an observation of days and times, which is certainly superstitious: As is evident from Deut. xviii. 10. Where among other things, An observer of times is declared an abomination to the Lord, and one provocation of the Gentiles, for which they were driven out of their land. And in the New Testament, the Galatians are reproached, by S. Paul, for observing days, and

a

74

di

in

months, and times and years, which in his reckoning, feems to great a crime, that for this he fears all the labour he had bestowed upon them, to be in vain, Gal. iv. 10, 11.

Q. The case is clear above dispute, that the observation of days and times is here condemned as very criminal; but what kind of observation is this?

A. What is here condemned, is first, The observation of days, months, and times, dedicated by the heathens to their false gods, as to fupiter, Bacchus, &c. Secondly, The disference of days, lucky and unlucky; and these were the abominations of the heathens condemned in Deut. xviii. Lastly, The feasts of the Jews, to which, though abrogated, certain of the Jews, who believed, endeavoured to reduce the Galatians, contrary to the Apostles doctrine. All such observation of days is forbidden in scripture, and therefore, carefully to be avoided by christians, as the crime of the heathen or Jew.

be

nd

As

ere

is

and

ich

l in

re-

and

Q. What think you of the observation of times and days, in use among many christians, as of Christmas, Easter, and other holy-days, with lent and other fasts? Are these forbidden in Holy Writ?

A. Such fealts and fasts are not forbidden in Deut. since God, who forbids there the

O ij

ral feasts to be observed in memory of past benefits. Some of which, as the feast of passover, of weeks, and of tabernacles, are enjoined in the foregoing chapter, c. 16. As in other places he commands likewise abstinence from certain meats, and particular meats at particular times, as Exod. 12. Now what he thus ordains and commands, cannot be the observation of time, which he condemns.

Again, in the new testament, it is not forbidden, fince we find there the Apostles, with the faithful, meeting on the first of the Sabbath, and the Lord's Day, (or Sunday) mentioned by S. John, Rev. c. i. Into which the Jewish Sabbath was changed. Now if the Apostles had so great regard to Christ's Resurrection, that for this they made an alteration of the day, which by God's express command was to be kept holy, it is evident, fuch an observation of days is not forbidden; but on the contrary, this fact of the Apostles implies this declaration, That it is good to keep days holy in memory of the mysteries of our redemption: And wthole as many an folemn defeltivals of Christmas, Easter, See observed in the primitive church, are proof enough, d ful acknowledgment of his bleffing,

0

fi

u

o

CI

G

fu

shirlors alas in the object of in the memory selflog A

The nature of the institution likewise pleads for it. For it being not only good, but a great duty, to be grateful, and to give thanks for the bleffings of God; it must be good, upon the motive of gratitude, to appoint days for the particular remembrance of God's bleffings, and to give thanks for them. It being likewise another duty to humble ourfelves for our fins in fasting and prayer; it must be good to appoint days for such an humiliation. And the practice of all christian states and congregations, in appointing and keeping days of public thanksgiving and humiliation, upon occasions of general concern, which feem to demand it, is argument enough to prove, that, in the common sense of all christians, it is not forbidden either in the old testament or new. to appoint, and keep days, by fetting them apart for such ends, and that this is not the observation of times and days condemned as fuperstitious. in soliding asillos

Q If there be reason to keep such days, in

rubat manner are they to be kept?

y)

to

d.

to

de

d's

is

not

act

on,

ory

on:

of

the

0.01

101

Al Induch a manner as may answer the ends for which they are appointed; so that God may be glorified in them, by the grateful acknowledgment of his blessing, (the

O iij

particular confideration of which, must oblige us to be more faithful in his fervice) and by the confession of our manifold transgressions; the fight of which must oblige us to submit to his justice, and be more solici-

tous in imploring his mercy.

There are certainly great abuses in the keeping of holy days and fasts, such as are very provoking to God, as it was among the Jews, upon which account God declared, that their oblations and solemnities were hateful to him, Isa. i. 11. These I plead not for, but declare, that such as have a part in them, are ignorant of the ways of God, are prophane in abusing what is good and holy, and are sacrilegious in turning good into evil.

Q. How then are fuch days to be kept,

and first the feasts? Those youll said in I

A. In spirit and in truth, and not by

outward observance only at the wants ad of

First, The christian is to consider the mystery or mercy of the day: And having

taken time duly to apprehend it. which and

2dly, He is to offer from his heart a factifice of thanksgiving: For thanks being due for mercy, this is an act of justice, and not a ceremonial observation of the Old Law, and therefore never to to be abrogated:

given thanks from his heart, that the best thanksgiving is in works and life, and therefore, that he ought to do all the good he can, in his circumstances, and learn to live to Christ, avoiding all evil, and walking

according to the Gospel.

d

a of

d

t,

by

he

ng

fa-

ing

ind

aw,

i iii

tion, that is, the doctrine and the life of Christ, and there learn, what is the spirit of Christ; what the rule of his wisdom; what according to this rule, is good and what evil; what things we are to desire, seek and labour for; what we are to be jealous of, fear or avoid: And what the difference is between the rule of Christ and of the world, between the Gospel and custom, common practice, human authority, or education. This is a study requires a long and serious application, and when known, requires often to be renewed or revived.

Lastly, He ought to give more than usual time to reading and prayer, examine into his daily failings, consider the occasions of them, see what is to be done for amendment, humble himself, and by a sincere repentance, prepare to make his peace with God, resolve upon a new life; and not only in general, but by proposing and undertaking something in particular, that so on days dedicated to

O iv

God, he may approach nearer to God. And if it be a day of any holy servant of God, there is thanksgiving due upon his account, and very much to be learned from his example, in patience, humility, contempt of the world, &c.

Q. How are fasts to be kept?

A. As days of humiliation, for the punishment of fin.

First, He is to mortify his appetite by obferving rules prescribed for this end, and not study then to gratify, when it is a time

to punish.

2dly, He ought to keep an inward fast, by avoiding all that is finful, by denying all corrupt inclinations, and labouring to overcome himself in all, that is not according to the Gospel.

and by the fighs of an humble and contrite heart, endeavour to turn away the anger

b

of God from him.

offender, who is to make atonement for his past sins and sue for mercy. Hence like a criminal owning his guilt, he ought to decline all that is favourable to appetite, curiosity, idleness, and vanity, and not take any liberty, which is not agreeable to the state of an humble penitent.

A. It being the day on which Christ suffered for our offences; decency seems to require something, and repentance mora.

1. The death of our Redeemer deserves a weekly acknowledgment; how many do smuch for their friend? 2dly, His death for sin, requires a weekly humiliation of the sinner. 3dly, That we should live, as penitents, separated from all that delights. 4thly, That we should with submission receive whatever punishment God sends us on that day. 5thly, That we shew no impatience on that day, but suffer all that happens in union with Christ on the cross, and in his spirit of humility, patience and silence.

Lastly, that we feek to have a part in the redemption Christ wrought for us by more than ordinary diligence in prayer and reading, by repentance, felf-denial, and embracing all occasions of humbling ourselves both before God and man. In this manner, to observe these days, cannot be suspected of superstition; though still in the abuses of them, as of all other good things, there must be great sin.

e

er

nis

ne

ty,

li-

of

all that is favourable to appente, curiofity, idlenels, and vanity, and not take any liberty, which is not agreeable to the flate of an humble penitent.



# cobether we due, we will the lard of Whe-

# burged on how have clory of God and see rock

Q. HAVING now gone through fo many christian duties, tell me to what end is a christian to refer all he does?

A. He ought to refer all he does, to the

glory of God.

Q. Why Jo?

A. Because God is Alpha and Omega, he is the beginning and end: All things began in him, and in him all ought to end. This is his effential right, and to deprive him of this, is a fin of injustice. 2dly, Because we are purchased by the blood of Christ, and therefore belonging to him, as his servants or slaves, are bound to serve him and seek him in all things; this is another title of justice, and therefore, not to do it, is to be unjust.

Q. How do you show this right of God, and

this our duty to him? was blis anune hansig

A. Out of S. Paul: Christ died for all, that they, who live, should not benceforth live unto themselves, but unto him, who died for them, and rose again, 2 Cor. v. 15. Ye are bought with a great price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are

33

God's, 1 Cor. vi. 20. None of us liveth to bimself, and no man dieth to bimself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord : Whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end, Christ both died, and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living, Rom. xiv. 7, 8, 9. Here you fee a clear title, which God has in us, which obliges us to feek and glorify him in all things.

Q. How are we to fatisfy this duty in

practice? Vine 5 5410

e

2

TO

m

e,

nd

all

live for

are

art

A. By having a constant will of pleasing God, and doing his will in all things. For as all infensible things glorify their Creator, by keeping in that order, and ferving that end, for which they were created: So if man makes use of his reason and faith to know the will of God; and daily endeavours to do his will; he, by this means, answers the end of his creation, and glorifies God, in observing that order, in which God has placed him, and ferving him with that being, which he has received from him. The christian then, that thus makes the will of God the rule of his life, does in so doing glerify God. 100 2

Q Is there any other way for this practice? the Lip On both wild in your forth, which were

A. Yes, there is, by offering every thing we do in particular, to the glory of God; confecrating every action to him; protelting, that what we do, is not to fatisfy inclination, interest, or any other human respect, but because he requires it from us, and our circumstances, under him, have made it our duty; and lastly, humbly befeeching him to accept it from our hands. In this manner, every thing we do, will become a facrifice to God, being purified from those selfish motives of inclination, self-love, passion and the world, with which our actions are generally defiled.

Q. This may be in prayer and other good works or offices of piety: But can the common actions of human life and business be made such

a sucrifice?

A. Yes, they may: S. Paul in particular directs it, as to eating and drinking: Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye don do all to the glory of God, i Cor. x. 31. He expresses eating and drinking, which are actions of necessity, and then adding these other comprehensive words, or whatsoever ye do, he shews, that all other things, or actions (sin only excepted) may be thus offered to God. In his advice to servants, he bids them serve, Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing

God and subatforwar ye do, de it bearsily, as to the Lord, and not unto men i knowing, that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inberitance; for ye serve the Lord Christ, Coliii. 22. Here he declares, that the common works of fervants, though done for hire, may be offered to God; that, being for offered, God will accept them from their hands, and likewife, that he will give them the recompence of their labours. From which it is very obvious to gather, how all the actions and labours of christians, in the discharge of their lawful employments, may, be made a part of this christian facrifice, and for become acceptable to God, as likewife all the troubles, difficulties, and afflictions which may any ways befal him, in the whole course of his life.

1 Q. Is there yet any other way of this practice? A. I add no other way, but something to perfect this already mentioned; and that is. To offer up all we do or fuffer in this life, in union with Christ. expresses eating and

of Q: How is this to be?

21

1

e

.

[e

ye

or

us

ts,

as

ng

A. You know, nothing can be acceptable to God from us, but through Christ. therefore we defire, our offerings may find acceptance with God, we must offer them in union with what Christ did; that fo though what we do or fuffer be contemptible in itself. and not worthy of God's acceptance it may become valuable through Christ. And this is a way of offering facrifice and a holy priesthood, which belongs to all the faithful, to whom S. Peter fays, Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual facrifices, acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ, I Peter ii. 5. As therefore all comes from God to us by Jesus Christ; so all ought to return to God by Jesus Christ. The end of whatever graces or other talents we receive, is the glory of God and of Jesus Christ; to this then ought to be directed all our desires, purposes, and designs, That God in all things may be glorified, through Jesus Christ, I Pet. iv. II.

A. It is; but pray remember what it is; It is, First, To endeavour in all things to do the will of God, that is, to keep the commandments and be zealous in every good work. Then it is to cut off from whatever is done, all private or human respects; it is to make God the end of all; to seek his glory in all; and to offer all to him through Christ. This is what Christ has taught us, it is what Christ did, who is our head, and if the members are thus united to their head, doing all things in union with him, it cannot be questioned, but through Christ they will become acceptable to God.

i

0

vaQ. Can evil christians do this?

A. Except they are truly converted, they cannot; because these seek generally their own will, are led by their corrupt inclinations, by their passions, by evil customs, by ill company, by interest, by pride, by prodigality, by intemperance, by floth, by the world. Now these being not according to the will of God, whatever is done upon fuch ill motives, is not capable of being offered to God; neither can they pretend to offer it, but their own conscience must give them the lie. But as for all fober and pious christians, who are solicitous to avoid evil, are fearful of offending God, and have a true defire of falvation; their lives and the greatest part of what they do, is capable of being made an offering to God, and it must be very ill management in them, if they omit the doing it wolfan led has sand

Thefe then ought to study well the life of Christ, observe all he did and suffered, that he prayed, fasted, laboured, relieved the distressed, received sinners, suffered reproaches, calumnies, fasse accusations, persecutions, with him: When they pray and adore God, let them join their prayers with his, offer them to God in union with his: So likewise when they fast, humble or deny

1

t

b

themselves, when they labour, help their neighbourd fuffer woontradictions, oreproofs are in necessity, diffres, pain, are accused falfly oppressed or persecuted; in all, let them, in spirit, join themselves with Christ, their Head, confiding, not in themselves, but through Jesus Christ, to find acceptance with God. And though it cannot be expected, but that private motives and worldly confiderations will naturally press; yet a christian may fanctify all fuch as are fubordinate to the will of God, by daily endeavouring to raise his mind to God, and to correct the motives of nature by others, which are divine. And as for all the other motives. which are the effect of corruption, and therefore faulty, fuch as of immoderate felflove, vanity, interest, love of the world, floth, love of ease, desire of esteem, &c. It must be the christian's daily business, to be industrious in purifying his heart from all fuch mean and corrupt motives, to be watchful against them, and not to let them steal from God what, upon all the titles of justice, belongs to him, as his right. is a difficult talk, but where the love of God is, there it is undertaken, and carried on with great fuccess, though it may be, never truly perfected in this life: This is left to a better state; but here it produces the happy the light of God; and while it disengages the heart from creatures, and puts it in the best disposition of making a facrifice of all to God, through Jesus Christ: It gives a comfortable assurance in God, of the accomplishment of his promise, that the sacrifice begun here, shall be consummated in heaven.

# the will ox do N and Page Acaverage to

raile his mind to God, and to correct the For particular States and Conditions.

FIAVING in other tracts given instructions to particular states of christians, I intend not bere to enlarge upon the subject, but for avoiding repetitions, only to set down the principal bligations of each state, under several heads, which like an index something improved, may bely the memory of such as desire to be faithful in their duties, without giving them the trouble of much reading.

e

of

is

d

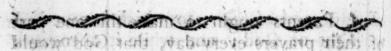
n

er

a

y

justice, belongs to him, as his right. This is a difficult tast, but where the love of God is, there it is under them, and carried on with great fuecess therein it may be, never truly perfected in this life; This is left to a bester thate; but here it produces the happy



Of Chaling a Brain of 1 19.

#### methorh Iren of AeiHhiDen in this

## Of Chusing a State of Life.

Q.WHY need a christian be concerned in the choice of a state of life?

A. Because it is a business of great concern, both in regard of this life, and of that to come.

Q. How is the next life concerned in it?

A. Because the circumstances of this life are very different, in being helps or hinderances of falvation. Some are inconfistent with the Gospel, as being unlawful, others are a great fnare, others a perpetual distraction, others are attended with variety of dangers and impediments; and others again are bleffed with as many degrees of good opportunities for working out their falvation. As therefore molt persons have a concern in the choice they are to make, upon the account of their well-being here; fo much more ought they to be folicitous, upon the confideration of their well-being hereafter: And if they be not, they do not in this act as Christians.

Q. What method are christians to take in the choice of their state, and in fettling themselves for life. wat

h

A. Parents ought to make this one part of their prayers every day, that God would direct both them and their children in this affair, as he did the Patrlarchs. And every one ought to do the same in a most particular manner for themselves, befeeching God to be their guide and counfel; that he would please to manifest his will unto them, and discover by such means, as he shall please, what will be most agreeable to him and their own everlasting good. This they are obliged to do, because all depends upon God; and likewife because, he being effentially the beginning and end of all things, it must be an injustice in them, if they take from him this his right, and do not make him the beginning of what they do warm and sale of sales

ıl,

ral

th

nd

ny

ng

oft

ice

ore

con-

ter:

act

in

bem.

Now God having deputed parents over their children, it is a regular way for children to confult their parents, for discovering the will of God. And as for those, who, having good, discreet, pious parents, do not consult them in this affair, it can be no wonder, if thus forsaking the way of God's appointment, they become the authors of their own misfortunes. But if there be (as sometimes it may be) just reasons for not seeking the resolution of this affair from parents; yet since God so

often by the mouth of Solomon, directs youth to take counsel and follow advice, they cannot hope to have God for their guide, if they do not feek it his own way; and hence are obliged to confider of some good, discreet and faithful person, to whom they ought to communicate their own inclinations, with all other circumstances; and this with all that truth and fincerity, as may make them capable of advising them for the belt. Proceeding in this manner, they will act as wife in regard of this world, and as good christians in regard of the other; and may, with reason, hope to escape those many inconveniencies which others draw upon themselves, by their presumption, rashness or indifcretion. only a hand nulse men as

Q. If this be the best method, what particular cautions are there for youth or others concerned, to observe, for coming nearer to it?

A. First, Upon no consideration whatever to engage in any unlawful profession, or to do any thing that is finful for getting a livelihood.

is very dangerous, and which is necessarily attended with very great temptations; except, upon good advice, a person be found to have such a particular call to it,

f

as may give him hopestof particular grace, to fecure him from min. leaned a sat of divoy

violence of passion; because these are very blind and rash, and have betrayed such infinite numbers to misery and ruin, that it must be nothing less than folly, to take them for guides and confide in their direction. Better counsel therefore must be taken, as above.

mined by interest, honour, estate or any other human consideration or worldly advantage. For that neither money nor honour have the happiness of this world annext to them; there being many persons far from being happy, who want neither of these. And as for the next world, how many have lost the opportunities of being christians, by being with too much eagerness, bent upon an estate, title or retinue? These so entirely leave out God, that they come at length to lose him; and varieties of missortunes are the punishment of their worldly choice.

18

at

or

911

at-

on,

ing

hat

rily

ns;

be

nat,

undertake to advise, but are not qualified for it, as being either unexperienced, indiceet, or passionate; or in such circumstances, as may bring them under suspicion

of feeking themselves only, and betraying those whom they advise, for their own gain. There is too much of this in the world, and both good-nature and affection are imposed on for the success of this treachery.

6thly, Not to consider the conveniencies of this world only, but more the advantages for the next. For while faith regards a future state, they seem to have no faith, who look not beyond this world in what they do: And if they prosper accordingly

they must thank themselves.

Thefe, with variety of other fuch cautions, ought to be observed by such as defire to make a christian choice of their state. Those who do it not, fo far depart from the ordinance of God, and take from him his right of disposing the universe. A point which all ought to be afraid of, and more especially here, where his direction is so necessary: For fince most states of life have great difficulties and dangers attending them; fince most professions have knavery and injustice mixt with their practife, there must be a very great hazard of not choofing well, if God does not direct the choice. But the choice being made, it is the obligation of every one in particular, to fatisfy the duties of their respective states. the regard degree washingtowned the burn there is con-

our

11

Cati

he

6w

for

Par

Driv

ditio



# There is too H cip A the Du the world,

## ingeneral being the confidence in well with the cherty.

Q. WHAT are the obligations of this

A. The substance of them is set down by St. Paul. He that is unmarried is careful for the things that belong to our Lord, how he may please God. But he that is married, is careful for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife: And he is divided. The unmarried woman and the Virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be boly both in body and in spirit. But she that is married, careth for the things of the world, how she may please her hushand. This I peak for your prosit, that you may attend upon our Lord without distraction, I Cor. vii. 32.

ie is

nt

fo

ive

m;

and

the

of

ities

Q. Of whom does the Apostle Speak?

A. Of fuch, as renouncing all carnal latisfactions, have chosen Jesus Christ for their spouse, and thus by the choice of their own will, have made themselves Eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. Of these St. Paul, in these words, declares the particular privileges, and likewise what are the conditions, end and obligations of their state.

Q. What are thefe?

A. The Apostle sets them down in three general heads:

First, Their great solicitude is to be in

the things that belong to God.

adly, They are to make it their study how to please God.

3dly, They are to labour to be holy both

in body and in spirit.

From these general heads may be inferred

many particular obligations:

First, That they are not to choose this state for avoiding the inconveniencies of their family or the world, or upon some humour, disgust, rash or melancholy resolution, but upon the consideration of their eternal state, and for the love of Jesus Christ.

E

1

a

n

ſί

th

fo

fu

cl

of

fu

en

en

Ital

2. That having undertaken this state, they are not to place their satisfaction in the

enjoyment of themselves.

3. They are not to keep any unnecessary correspondence with the world: And all correspondence must be judged unnecessary which distracts their minds with worlds solicitude, which lessens their affection to God, and divides their heart, all this the ought to be cut off, as far as it is possible.

or particular familarities, such as posses

the heart with affections and folicitude; because, if there be nothing farther reprovable in it, yet it must be confessed injurious to the love due to Jesus Christ, whom they have chosen for their spouse.

5. They are to turn their whole thoughts and heart towards God, and remember it is the business of their lives to seek him, to please him, to do his Holy Will in all

things.

of

ne

U.

eir

ate

the

Tary

l all

fary

rldh

the

le.

inar

offel

th

6. This being a state so holy, they cannot comply with the duties of it, but by a particular assistance of the divine grace: Hence they are to solicit the grace of God with all earnestness, in fervent prayer, by a continual humiliation, by fasting and self-denial and all exercises of piety, and the sacraments.

7. For the same end they are to keep a strict watch over all their senses, over all the affections, passions, and motions of their souls, and by this care bring all into that subjection, that now not natural temper, inclination or self-will may have the command of them, but only the will of God.

Lastly, As the possession of God in a future state is their desire and hope, and the end of all they propose, so their continual endeavour ought to be, to approach to that state, by uniting their souls to God, by love

Vol. XII.

by adoration, and obedience in the perpetual approbation of his will, and by such a fincere furrender of themselves, into his hands, that they may become his kingdom, and he truly reign in them: This is the life of the blessed, but cannot be perfected there, except it be begun here. To these heads may be reduced all other particular obligations of this state.

Q. But can this be expected from fuch at live in the world?

A. Such are under great difadvantages, but however, much may be done by those who are in earnest.

First, They may observe great moderation in their diet and dress, in their company and words and visits; they may observe retirement, decline all public shews and entertainments, and in their retreat apply themselves to the study of the Gospel, and endeavour to regulate their lives by it having their hours appointed for prayer reading, rising, working, &c. In this method there cannot be avoided many self denials, and many more may be added, for the bringing the inward man into subjection but this with the advice of some discreet an experienced person.

Q. The world will scarce allow of all this

A. I do not see that the world courts those who do not court it. Those who make but few visits, will not be disturbed with many. But for this, if persons do as much as they can in their circumstances, the rest must be dispensed with.

A. If fingularity be the effect of pride, it is not to be countenanced, but otherwise it must be encouraged: For where almost all go out of the way and forsake the Gospel, this general corruption obliges those to be singular who will follow it.

who are in earnest.

23

se

ra.

pa-

TVE

and

ply

and it.

ayer,

this

, for

Ction

t an

this

Light, They may observe great moderation, and weeks and vises, they may observe the modern and weeks and vises, they may observe themens, seekine all public thems and concertainments, and in their retricat apply themselves to the tindy of the Gospel, and contained to the Gospel, and having it in the pointed for prayer that in the bringing the inward man into subjection the bringing the inward man into subjection but this with the advice of some discreet and

experienced person.

(CP) he sworld real starte alsow of all this,

### גרדיל ב אר הר לרדיל כ ארדיל ב דיל ב דיל

married Ferr

#### CHAP. III.

#### Of married Perfons.

Q: WHAT is the first obligation of mar-

A. The first is to God, to love him above all things, to serve him and keep his commandments: Hence amidst all the distractions, solicitude and business of their state, yet still the kingdom of God is to be sought before all things, and whoever lays by this concern, or upon the consideration of family, or in compliance with affection or interest, transgresses this command of God, and lives on in such offence, such an one loves husband or wife or children more than Christ, and therefore cannot be his disciple.

Q. What other obligations have they?

A. They have obligations to one another

te

a

Ca

P

Pa

av

no

and thefe are many:

First, They are to love one another, as one body and one slesh, even as Christ loves his church.

2. They are to do all things that are necessary for maintaining this love. They are to be meek and moderate to each other,

bear with one another's infirmities, have great compassion and an untired patience.

3. They are to avoid contention and unkind disputes: Quarreling ought not to be

admitted in this first alliance.

r

er

as

are

ney

er,

4. Hence they ought not to give provocation to each other, but having now a knowledge of one another's tempers and weakness, are to use great, and even an universal compliance, for preventing misunderstandings, or rather than give a jealousy of any unkindness.

5. If one be disturbed, it is then the others part to study and take all the ways of sweetness, tenderness and moderation, so to prevent disorder, and for bringing all again into a calm.

6. In time of fuch disturbance, it is not then seasonable for the other to shew the unreasonableness of the passion, or make any kind of remonstrance or plea, upon any pretext, however just and reasonable it may appear. This ought to be adjourned to some calmer season, when a person is better disposed to hear reason and sollow it; for passion is certainly a hinderance to both.

7. Hence great care is to be used, in avoiding all words that may displease; nothing is to be said or done with a design

Janto The The trenston but Is on Pin

to provoked Prudence is to govern the tongue, and moderation to temper the mind.

8. All approaches of indifferency are to be banished from the mind, and the least symptoms of dislike, ill-will, and aversion are to be dreaded, as a monster, or the worst of poison.

of If any difference happens, no complaints ought to be made of it to any friend, for such indiscretion often makes a breach incurable. No thwartings or contradictions ought to be used at any time, much less in public, for such indiscreet liberties of the tongue create great uneasiness, and prepare the way for dislikes.

These with other like rules ought to be strictly observed, for the support of that love and peace, which are particular to this state. Peace and charity are the obligation of all christians to one another, even in regard of enemies: How much more here, where the bond of unity is so much stricter, and peace so absolutely necessary, that they can hope for no comfort, if peace be not maintained! All then ought to be given for peace; this purchase cannot be too dear, where there is any likelihood of preserving it. A great deal may certainly be done towards it, where tempers are so well known, as they must be here. There is a way of dealing

with all tempers; this point must be studied ;o: and when the way is discovered a mothing of humour or difficulty is to diffwade from that, which is likely to contribute fo much to peace. There may be occasion, in the practice, for great felf-denial, humility and compliance, but still peace is worth it all. It is better to yield, than to live in contention; and if discretion were always ready, I do not question, it would manage compliance fo, as to keep peace even with the most difficult tempers; and therefore where it is not kept, I must lay it generally to the want of good management, which is but another name for indifferetion. Let it but be confidered upon what trifling occasions differences are raised, and this alone will justify, in a great part what I fay. For the better establishment of peace, it must be rememberchristians to one mother, even, in regard .bs

e

e

e.

of

he

ce

pe

d?

his

eat

it

hey

ing

First, That the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church? Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in every thing. This is the ordinance and command of God, Eph. v. 23, 24.

as their own bodies: He that love their wives, as their own bodies: He that loveth his wife, loveth himself: For no man ever yet hated his own steph, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.

P iv

This likewife is the ordinance and command

of God, Epb. v. v. 28, 29.

Hence, First, wives ought to submit to their husbands, as to their head: Ought to observe their ways and will, and in all lawful and reasonable things comply with them, they are not to dispose of or spend, but with the confent, expressed or presumed, of him, in whom the power is lodged, according to

the ordinance of God.

2. Husbands are to remember the love due to their wives, and that they are neither their slaves nor servants, but as their own bodies, parts of themselves; and to be nourished, cherished, and taken care of, as fuch. Hence they are to be provided with all necessaries, and likewise with such reasonable conveniencies, as may be for the comfort of life. And to be wanting in this care, is unnatural and inhuman in itself, and an absolute transgression of God's command. These hints may be enough for all, who are willing to be directed; but if any thing extraordinary happens, they are to be confulted, whose office it is to direct.

I add nothing of the conjugal debt, but fay with St. Paul, that every one should know to poffess his veffel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles, who know not God, I Theff. iv. 4.

What is permitted, is lawful; but the christian is to be careful, that under this colour, he do not take liberties, which are unlawful. He ought to be mindful too of the same Apostle's advice, in observing some temperance, by consent for a time, that they may give themselves to fasting and prayer, I Cor. vii. 5. It is good then and an acceptable self-denial, which has regard to days of solemn fasts or devotion.



### C. H A P. IV. Portet Trents

#### Of Parents.

Q. WHAT are the obligations of parents to their children?

A. They are many; some of these begin, even before the children are born.

First, It is the mother's care to prevent miscarriages, and untimely births; because in these the life of children is concerned, and at least their health. The point is so considerable, that is such an unhappy accident be occasioned by the mother's fault, it cannot be excused from the guilt of sin, and may be very criminal.

U

occasion to such unnatural accidents, either by this passion for other ill-usage. For if by such, or other like ways, he be the faulty occasion of it, his sin is no less than murder, even the unnatural murder of his own.

child be baptifed; and that this be not deferred upon any compliment to goffips, or for

any ceremony or entertainment. to area add

and to omit this without necessity, is to

transgress the ordinance of Godes to Selgen

this office of a mother, it ought to be done under the mother's eye, and with great choice of the person. For that a stranger, and at a distance, are two circumstances, which are likely to come very short of a mother's care; and this is so considerable, that the constitution, health and even life of the child are concerned in it; and therefore ought to be the parents concern, lest they concur to the murder of their own.

first year, the child be not laid in bed with mother, nurse, or servant, because of the danger of being overlaid. The yearly and even weekly bills of London shew what this

changer is, in the number of infants murdered this waybisse la number of infants murdered this waybisse la number of infants of infants
yd 7. 10 As children become ofenfible; it must
be the mother's care to keep an awe upon
them, and give them early impressions of
subjection, so to prevent any kind of ill humours then to take root and strengthen in
them. 10 n ed sint tada has; believed ed blide

8. As they advance in years, it must be the care of both parents, to fee them duly educated for a christian life; They must be taught to read, and instructed in the christian doctrine. To neglect either of these, is the neglect of their souls, and unchristian.

venting the growth of an ill humour, of stubbornness, violence, felf-will, fretfulness, anger, &c.

grow up, as likewife all niceness in diet, clearly idleness Get his and a redion

That this may be done well, parents are to mix their natural love towards their children, with reason and religion, so to suppress all immoderate sondness; for this being a passion stark blind, is very unfit for that business, which requires many eyes. This seldom sees faults in children, always finds excuses for them, sometimes makes them to be virtues, and never thinks punish-

ment feasonable; and therefore, as nothing can be more injurious to good education, so it is what parents ought to dread, as an industrious evil, which treacherously makes them the ruin of their children, while they think of nothing, but doing them

good.

12. As fondness is an evil, so is likewise the other extreme of harshness, ill-nature and cruelty. There is a tenderness and compassion due to children: And as their heedlesness and corrupt nature makes correction and reproof necessary; so there is a necessity of great moderation, that so children may not come to have a dislike to their parents, and love any company more than theirs. Correction then must be given, but passion ought not to manage the rod.

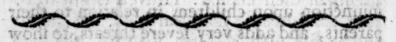
14. When riper years fit them for higher education, parents ought to take care of it; being always mindful not to hazard their fouls, for giving an air to their children, and making them modifh. The knowledge of Jesus Christ and of his Gospel, ought to be their principal care, and nothing allowed, which is not consistent with this. Dangerous entertainments, idle company and books are to be forbidden, vanity and idleness are to be discouraged; and youth of all degrees are

to be taught to employ their time and love business.

14. Provision is to be made for them, and care taken for their being disposed of. The consideration of honour, or money, or any worldly convenience; ought not to direct parents in their choice: Heaven ought to be more considered, than earth in this affair. And as for such as seem forward, the care of parents ought to be early, to prevent their making themselves miserable by their own indiscretion.

Parents then are bound to provide, by their best industry, that their children be not lest thus exposed. And nothing can be more inhuman, than for parents, out of an immoderate induspence of their own vain human, prodigal passion or vice, to bequeath to their children a lasting misery, even such, as may not end with this world. How many parents have thus brought their children into so many missortunes, that it would have been less cruel to have cut their throats?

And when all is done, the dangers of miscarriage in youth are so many, that a parent can never be without fear. This one thing then ought to be their general care, so to discharge their duty to their children, by watchfulness, instruction and good example, that if afterwards these take ill ways, they may have this satisfaction at least, that nothing has been occasioned through their neglect.



#### ai besho, Cv H wa rip! to vinus

### Of Children to Parents.

Q. WHAT are the obligations of children to their parents?

A. There are three principal ones: 1. To love them. 2. To honour them. 3. To obey them. All these have their several branches.

First, Children are to defire no evil to

2. They are to defire and to do them all

good.

3. They are, to defend them, according to the best of their abilities, from all injuries.

that They are to avoid lall reproachful to done upon principle of considerations

tempt.

6. They are to do nothing willingly to watchfulnels, infirmftion ment xsy to swith

7. They are to hearken to their advice, obey their commands, in what is lawful, and express no difrespectful dislike of their orders.

So far from the word of God lays a strict injunction upon children, in relation to their parents, and adds very levere threats, to show the greatness of their guilt, who offend in this point, and what punishment they may expect, if not prevented by a timely repentance.

O. If this to be the duty of children, what

is the first thing you recommend to them?

A. That from the time, when they first begin to have a fense of their duty, they accustom themselves to shew respect to their parents, not only in words and actions, but more particularly, in a cheerful and ready compliance with their directions and orders : for this is what God has commanded, and they can no otherwise hope for his bleffing. than by observing this his command.

As children grow up, so this principle ought to make greater impressions in them: for that what before was custom, now ought to be done upon principle of conscience. They ought to have it ever before their eyes; that their parents are put over them

by the express order of God; that they have God's commission for what they do; that God speaks to them by their parents, whose deputies they are: And hence, that as their deference and respect to them ought to be very great, so they ought to be afraid of offending, displeasing, neglecting, or disobeying them. In this manner their confcience ought to be framed, as God's word directs them.

If through heedlesness or ill humour they have disobeyed or displeased their parents, they ought, upon the first intimation of it, to humble themselves, beg pardon, promise amendment, and so endeavour to make their peace; and, above all things, to be asraid of stubbornness, as of the worst of evils; as an evil, against which God has declared his great displeasure, and which puts men in the danger of becoming like devils, who being once in the wrong, will ever be so, and can never change.

As they ought not to be stubborn, so they are to shew no ill humour, not to grumble or swell at any reproof or order of their parents; but, whatever their inclination be, so to compose themselves, as to appear always easy in the practice of their obedience and love. And if this be their duty, as it certainly is, then how strict ought to be their care, in

never mocking or expressing any contempt of their parents, either in words, or any signs or actions? For this cannot be done, but with the great offence of God, such as puts them in danger of not having him for their Father in heaven; and how unhappy then must children be, who lose his protection?

When now they are come to riper years, and have a better fense of reason and religion, their care must be greater, and their observance stricter; so as to give evidence of the love and true respect, which they have for their parents.

To give demonstration of this love and respect, they ought; First, both in words, actions, and attendance, to express a tender-

ness for them.

2. They ought to shew a desire to please them, and a real trouble, as often as they see them displeased at any thing they have done.

3. They ought not to hold any dispute with them, but choose to yield, even when

they think them mistaken.

4. They are to ask their parents advice in what they do; and even where there is no leave necessary, take some occasion of letting them know what they have done, or propose to do.

5. They are to consult with them in the choice of their company, of their divertisements, visits and employments; and do nothing in any of these, which they know will be a grief to their parents; and the same is to be observed as to their expences.

li

6. They are to communicate their inclinations to them, in relation to the choice of a state of life: And in the great affair for life, of chusing a wife or husband, ought to do nothing, but with their approbation and con-

fent.

7. If their parents have any natural weaknefs, or are subject to any ill custom, they
are not to presume to reprove them in public,
nor to reproach them behind their backs.
If their temper be such, as to allow of any
meek and submissive remonstrance, they
may make trial, but with all respect. If any
friend has sufficient interest with them,
advice is to be taken, whether it be proper
to engage such an one, to try what he can
do. But what cannot be remedied by due
means, it must be duty to bear with patience;
and even for children to do their duty, when
parents are so unhappy as not to do theirs.

These are some principal and general points; and if children would but consider what is due to parents, for the variety of care and solicitude in their education; and

elerable even in this life.

how strict is the obligation God has laid upon them; they would certainly fee it their interest to comply with them, and that those cannot pass for christians, who seem to be little concerned in this point.

## Hate of the AV m. P. at 13 are for the

tions to there, in relation to the choice of a

ob or migor Basalud no de and con-

Q. WHAT is the obligation of widows? Are they bound to abide in that state.

A. They have no fuch obligation : If they judge it reasonable to marry again, there is no law that forbids them. But they have St. Paul's advice, that though they are at liberty to marry, yet they are happier, if they abide fo as they are, I Cor. vii. 40 and the same he repeats in several other places. So that, if widows will take this Apostle's advice, the best thing they can do, (fuch as have a due knowledge of themfelves) is to confecrate their widowhood to God, and make a promife to him of never changing their state. This is the best they can do for the next world: And, if they observe the unhappy indiscretion of so many, who by fecond engagements make themselves miserable even in this life; I think they must

judge that to be wisdom, which may be a good means of establishing them against such temptations.

Q. If they do not marry, what directions are

they to observe?

A. Such as the fame Apostle has given

them, r Tim. v. 3.

First, If they have children, &c. they are to take care to give them good education, and breed them up in the fear of God.

2. They are carefully to provide for their family; for to neglect this is like the

im of infidelity.

3. They are to take care to be blameless: That is, to be so discreet, both within their family, in their conversation, visits, entertainments, correspondence and in all public places, as to give no just occasion to the world to reprehend their conduct.

4. They are to employ their time, and not to be idle, not wander up and down from house to house, not to be tattlers, nor busy-bodies, nor speak things, which they

ought not.

5. They are to be defolate as to this world, as persons who have had their present comfort snatched from them. Hence having experienced the uncertainty of this world, they are to raise their hearts towards God, and seek comfort, and trust in him.

6. Hence they are to continue in Supplications and prayers, night and day; in which words the Apostle shews how much they ought to seek God, and make heaven much more their business than earth.

These directions are given by the Apostle to widows, who resolve upon following his advice and abiding as they are. And from

thefe it is plain:

First, That he expects such widows should, in the first place, endeavour to make God their portion; that having formerly their hearts divided, now they should entirely give their hearts to God, and turn all that solicitude to him, which before had been employed in pleasing their husband.

2. That by affiduity and fervour in prayer and watching, they should make atonement

for all their past excesses and liberties.

3. That having been a part of the world, and joined with it in its immoderate solicitude, in its vanities, prodigalities and idleness, having had in a share in raising the esteem of its frothy and perishable goods; now, upon sinding, how deceitful it is, they should, by their example, endeavour to imprint ideas in all that know them; that the world is salse and vain, and that the only solid comfort of a christian, is in sollowing

the rules of the Gospel, and making provision for eternity. when and bus as wobiw

4. That hence they endeavour to retrench all fuperfluities; and having confidered what necessity demands and a moderate de. sency, they make, it their rule, to keep within these bounds: Avoiding vanity in their drefs; oftentation in their table, furniture and attendance, prodigality in their expences; and declining all those meetings and shews, which are defigned for nothing, but to main. tain folly and idleness. Ho not as sull

5. That by this method they endeavour to make fatisfaction for their former ill exam.

all that pleates, and following new the slave 6. That while they renounce the vanity and prodigality of the world, they be watch ful against all degrees of covetousness: For that to turn from vanity to the love of money, is not amendment, but only a change of evils; and who can tell, which is the more dangerous?

7. That they be cautious in their converfation, restrain all the undue liberties of the tongue, and be careful not to give an

offence.

8. That they love retirement, avoid unne ceffary visits, change these for some more to the purpose, in carrying comfort to the distressed, the sick, the comfortless, the widow, &c. and being ready to attend to all works of charity.

This feems to be what St. Paul expects from his widows, and it is what we find to have been the method of those widows commended in Scripture, Judith and Anna. It is the method of fuch as are to be esteemed Widows indeed, whom the Apostle commands Timothy to honour: Honour, fays he, Widows, that are Widows indeed, 1 Tim. v. But as for others, who make it their daily endeavour to supply the loss of their husband, by seeking to gratify themselves in all that pleases, and following now the bent either of a vain, prodigal or other worldly light or corrupt humour, without controll, St. Paul has given the character of fuch, in thefe few words; She, that liveth in pleasure (or delicately) is dead, while she liveth, 1 Tim. dv. 6.

n.

m.

ity |

109

ey,

of

ore

ver-

the

nne. re to the



W. Bonstlan

# C H A P. VH.

Selection Estate Services

## Of Masters and Mistresses.

Q. WHAT is the obligation of masters and mistresses?

A. They have several; but reduced under two principal heads, with relation to their estate or employment, and to their family or servants.

Q. What is the first, relating to their estate

or employment?

A. It is, That they ought to be faithful in their charge, whatever it be? If they have an estate, they are bound to be industrious in the management of it. If they have a profession or trade; they are obliged to use all care, that it be a present support and future provision.

Q. Why is this their obligation?

A. Because it is a duty of justice. He that has an estate, is strictly bound, both to God and his family, to manage it well.

Q. Is not be proprietor and master of his estate; and may be not then do with it as he

will?

A. He is so, in the phrase of human laws; but in the language of the law of God, he

is no more than fleward. Hence, though human constitutions leave him to his liberty. and whatever his extravagance or madness may be, such may be his title, that these will call him to no account : Yet it is not fo, with respect to God; for, by his laws, he is under a manifold restraint; and if he observes not the conditions, with which God has put the trust into his hands, as to all he possesses, he will be called to a fevere account, and must make fatisfaction for whatever waste can be proved against him. The summons of Redde rationem vilicationis tua, Give an account of thy stewardship, will certainly one day be fent to him. This then is a duty of justice in respect to God.

There is another, in respect to his family, which presses the same duty as an obligation of justice. For by the law of nature, parents are bound to take care of their children, and to make provision for them; and it must be an evident transgression of this law, if parents, by their want of care or by any extravagance, become disabled, that they cannot now dispose of them as their circumstances may require, but leave them to the dismal uncertainty of friends or fortune.

This fame duty presses upon persons of all degrees; hence whoever they be, that make their family unhappy, by their want of care,

Vol. XII

te

ul

n.

ley

red

ort

He

n to

bis

be

TVS;

he

is

by floth, by love of company, by intemperance, by entertainments, by vanity or any other ill way; it is certain they are unjust in being faithless or careless in their trust, and must answer for the many ill consequences of their unhappiness, who are made unhappy through their fault.

Q. This seems to touch only the masters

of families as subdoll of paid vil exides

A. It principally and generally concerns them; but sometimes the other sex too has its share in the guilt of this injustice.

First, By having a share in such extrava-

gant expences, as eat out an estate.

comply with their unreasonable desires; for some men are so weak, as to purchase peace

at home at any rate.

3dly, By being of so uneasy a temper, and so careless in governing it, that a man finding no comfort at home, seeks for it abroad; and by these steps unhappily runs into all extravagance, even to the ruin of his family. Now though such provocation cannot justify what he does, yet it is the part of discretion to provide against such ill consequences, and take away the occasions of them. There is dissiculty in overcoming nature, but the person must be obstinately mad, who will rather see all ruined, than not have the

n

he

ra

tance, by entertainments, by vanity bressng

gratifying their own inclinations, and following their entertainments or diversions, as feldom to be at home, and to neglect the whole concern of their family, which in justice belongs to their care.

sthly, By being so slothful, as to sleep away that time which should be employed in their family concerns; and at other times, to let every body do as they please, rather

than ftir to fee what is done.

ŝ

18

2-

to

for

ace

and

ling

and

ctra-

nily.

Hifr

tion.

and

erei

that

) wil

their

netic humours, so far, that they seem to be without life or spirit, and wholly unsit for business; and as for whatever life is left, it is so taken up with their own wants, that they have nothing left to think of their family; and so all is left to trust or ill management.

7thly, By observing no order or discipline; by taking no accounts; by not enquiring now every one manages their trust; by giving unreasonable liberties; by giving no eproofs where due; by not reforming disorders.

By these, and many other ways of vice or neglect, both masters and mistresses may be vanting in their duty, and offend against

Qij

justice, in not satisfying that trust which God has reposed in them, and doing great injury to their children, which, by the law of God and of nature, they are strictly bound to provide for; and these are sins not of an ordinary guilt. For though persons call their estates and money their own; yet they are not their own to spend and throw away at the demand of every vain, idle, extravagant or vicious humour.



#### C H A P. -VIII.

Of Masters and Mistresses, with regard to

O. WHAT is the obligation of Masters and Misseresses, in relation to their Servants?

A. They have many obligations: Some as to their fouls, and others as to their body.

First, As to what concerns their souls; it ought to be the care of masters and mistresses, that their servants live as becomes christians; hence they are to enquire, whether they say their prayers; and if circumstances would possibly allow it, it would be very proper that prayer were said in public or

common, where fervants may be encouraged in duty by the example of those over them.

2. They are to fee they duly keep the Lord's Day, and other days appointed to be kept holy; and ought so to contrive business, that they may have nothing to hinder them from this duty. Since God has commanded days to be fet apart and fanctified, this command ought to be kept; and it cannot be reasonable for servants to be excluded from it, who being employed all the week, have little opportunity for taking care of their fouls, if thefe days, which God has given them, be taken from them. Let the trifling occasions be confidered, upon which fervants are robbed of this privilege, and then the guilt of it will appear; and the reason likewise, why masters are generally no better served; for how can fervants be faithful to their masters, by whom they are hindered from ferving God? They bught likewise to see them provided with some good books; as also with some charitable person, who may instruct them in their christian duties.

3. They are to tolerate no custom amongst them of swearing, cursing, drinking, or of any kind of prophane, sinful or unseemly discourse. And if they have any servants subject to one of these failings, who after

18

it

1-

f-

er

es

Qij

three or four admonitions, or reproofs, do not mend, it must be advisable to discharge them, for the good of their family.

4. If they have sufficient reason to suspect any, as subject to any degree of immodesty, such ought forthwith to be

removed. Descriptions value which yet

5. They ought to be careful, not to command or order any thing, that is finful, or concurring to fin: And above all, to give them good example, so as never to say or do any thing, that may be an encouragement to them to offend God, in word or deed. Example is very contagious, and servants of evil inclinations, are glad to find shelter under the example of those, that are over them.

As to what concerns this world; first, masters and mistresses ought to be punctual in paying their servants wages. This God has strictly enjoined, and with great severity declared the guilt of such, as neglect to do it. Hence, it must be their duty, not to keep more, than they are able to pay.

2. They are to see, their provision be sufficient and wholesome; for their whole livelihood depending on their labour, and their labour on their health, it must be cruelty not to see them so provided, as may be consistent

nut if apress becalary, it outlies

not mend, it must be advis gnigholarish or

3. They are to find employment for them, fo as not to permit them to live an idle life; which however agreeable, yet cannot fail of

being very injurious to them.

e

0

e

â

0

0

.

f

r

O

Ô

r

t

4. While they employ them, they are to be careful not to oppress them; for this is cruelty, and generally the effect of a covetous spirit. Compassion here ought to take place, so that while necessity makes persons serve, they may yet have some comfort in their lives, and not be treated as slaves.

5. Hence it must be a christian part, not to expose their servants, where they would spare their beasts. Seasons and weather ought to be considered, and health and life ought not to be ventured for humour or fredic.

they must remember, they are to give an account of what they command. There is a way of commanding, which is imperious and harsh; and if some ungovernable tempers seem to require it; yet thus to carry thunder generally on the lips, is not agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel. Meekness and moderation are much the better character, and generally to be encouraged; but if anger be necessary, it ought to be

managed with discretion; for otherwise it turns into passion, and this never does good; oftener causing contempt, than reformation.

7. To be filent where faults deferve reproof or correction, is vicious mildness and unjust; and yet to be always finding fault is another extreme, fuch as deprives all fides of comfort. It is prudence to over-look fome faults, and if fervants are generally careful, it must not be advisable to disturb them about trisles and niceties, which being inconfiderable in themselves, are only magnified by humour. Where there are real faults or remarkable neglects, it is reproof enough to good tempers, to fee them pointed at; and where this will do, it must be an unnecessary trouble there to chide. But if some require reproof, let not anger be called in, till mildness be found ineffectual. Moderation and fweetness have great charms in them; and fince the Gospel demands them of all its profelfors, those who being heads of families are bound to give good example, ought not to lay them by. And if they find, that passion insensibly creeps upon them, they ought to be more watchful and never venture to reprove any while they are

angry. Finally mafters and mistresses are at all times to be mindful, that their fervants are their brethren, as of riftians, and fellowmembers under the fame head, and that they have one master with them, to wit, Christ Jesus, who having no respect of persons, will equally call to account, both bound and free; and reward every one, not according to their quality or degree here in this world, but according to their fidelity to to God: Whence those, who have been here contemptible, may come to be exalted in glory above those, who on earth were more honourable. Hence respect is to be had to fervants, and they not despised, whom-God may raife to honour above those who despise them. Upon which consideration, it must be a christian part in masters, to shew this respect to servants when they are fick, by taking all necessary care of them, both for foul and body, well as is and can

adly, When they reprove them, by not doing it, till they have examined the cause, and upon enquiry, have evidence of their being in fault. 3dly, By allowing them the liberty of speaking, if they have any thing reasonable to offer in their own excuse or defence. Lastly, if they have lived many years and have been suithful in their service.

by fettling fomething upon them for life, that they may not want and be miferable in their old age, whose best years and strength have been employed in their bufiness. Funderfak en genekaldens

#### Wot as fer. XI is A . A. H . O . at a so to W categorial villa whom the less and the market

## Of Servants. In a land gri

Q.WHAT are the obligations of Servants?

A. They are many; First to God: Eternity being above this life, they are not to accept of a place for a livelihood, where they have not opportunity of ferving God, and taking due care of their fouls.

2. Where they have daily ill example of prophaneness and of other fcandalous vices.

3. Where they must serve their masters

or others, in what is finful, and the wanted

4. Where there is danger of being drawn into fin, either by those, whom they serve,

or by other companions. Just decent, rale

In these or other like cases, if servants, for worldly advantages, accept of places, where eternity must be thus exposed; they condemn themselves of loving this world more than God and their own fouls, and therefore exclude themselves from the number of Christ's disciples. The state bas sully

A. They have others to those whom they ferve. They are to be faithful to them:

First, In punctually doing what they had undertaken, and belongs to their place: Not as serving the eye, and doing things carefully, when they are seen; but as serving the Lord, and for conscience sake, with care discharging their duty, even when they are not seen, because it is their duty, and they have God the witness of whatever they do:

giving away, what belongs to their master, without his consent or knowledge. Hence justice ties up the hands of servants, that they are not to dispose of what is their master's, but as he is pleased to order it: Neither are they to treat or entertain their friends or companions, at their master's cost.

S

n

s,

y

d

1-

loser through their neglect. There are many things in a family which are prejudiced, and other things which become wholly useless, through the sloth, neglect, or forgetfulness of servants. And the want of taking pains has often the same ill effect. Now whatever servant lets his master be a sufferer upon this account, such a servant must be essented

Q vj

faithless, and cannot therefore have a good conscience without amendment.

- 4. In being exactly just in giving account of whatever goods or money they have belonging to their master, and not taking any to their own use.
- 5. In not making any advantage to themfelves, of what belongs to their mafter. Therefore in buying or felling, all the profit, though never fo extraordinary, is the mafter's right; and if they make any bargain for their own gain, this cannot be just, any farther than the master is consenting to it.

Whatever therefore a fervant undertakes. ought to be done with great care and fidelity, and in fo doing, a fervant gives proof of his having a good conscience.

Q. What other obligation have fervants to

those whom they serve?

A. They have an obligation of being obedient to them. First, in doing what they are commanded.

2. In doing it willingly and cheerfully, without murmuring or figns of displeasure.

3. In being exact and punctual in doing what they are ordered; avoiding all unnecessary delays in messages or other business recommended to them: And not putting off to another time, what is better done at pre-

rather as a father days a malier

fent, and cannot be deferred without

danger of being forgotten.

which are contrary to the law of God, nor concurring in any thing, that is finful; for in such cases God is to be obeyed before man.

Q. What other obligations have fervants to

those, whom they serve ?

90 - ST

- A. They have another obligation of refpect. By this they are bound, First, to express outwardly that respect, both in words and actions, which is due to those, who, by God's appointment, have authority over them.
- of discourse, both with companions and strangers, which may lessen the reputation of those, whom they serve; and requires them to defend their good name, as often as calumny or ill-will attempts to blacken them.
- 3. It obliges them to conceal their private faults, and not to discover any failing or ill circumstance of the family, which is yet a fecret to the world. Hence they are always, in things lawful, to espouse there master's interest, to defend him with moderation, and serve him with affection and tenderness, rather as a father than a master.

Thefe are some principal points to be observed by all such, as are in service; and being fuch, as God has enjoined them, and what particularly belong to their state, none of this degree can pretend to a good conscience, if they do not make a conscience of them, if they do not diligently enquire, what their duties are, and faithfully endeavour to perform them. doubt vd sti for lives, eafy and comfortable :



#### and vet cxrv d.q dawid in upon them-

selves, by their negled, E'a

sweeding anger

## of Servants. dt vol o

Q. I Have still something farther to enquire concerning servants; and first, how they are to behave themselves, when they are reproved or chid com to to me and enable of

A. Always with submission and patience. But different circumstances may require a different method. The design sale of

First, If the reproof be for some real fault, then the reproof is due, and they ought to confider it, as an act of justice, to receive it with patience. In fuch case therefore they are obliged in filence to bear the anger they have brought upon themselves; and consequently, they are not to murmur, nor complain of ill humour or feverity; for this

would be to accuse the master, when the fault is their own as don't lie yo be reldo

Q. But if servants are of that difficult temper, that they cannot take any reproof, without making themselves uneasy, and shewing ill humour to their masters?

A. Such as cannot bear reproof, are to be the more careful in not giving any occasion for it; by such care they may make their lives easy and comfortable: And if they are not thus careful, they are certainly most unreasonable in complaining of uneasiness, and yet every day drawing it upon themselves, by their neglect, &c.

Q. May they not make some excuse, for

avoiding anger?

A. They are never to excuse themselves by a lie; for this is defending themselves with the devil's arms, and offending God, to escape the anger of men, which is not a christian part. The much better way is, to own the fault, to promise amendment, and to take the reproof with patience. This is the desence of the gospel, and those who have a faith in what it prescribes, will find it more to the purpose, in the good effect of it, than to take shelter in a lie.

Q. But if reproof be without just reason?

A. They are to have patience still: And if the moderate temper of those over them,

plain of ill borrows or feverity, for this

will give them leave to speak, they may in a few, peaceable and respectful words, declare the truth; and so leave their cause, till in some other opportunity, it may have a more

favourable hearing.

But if the passion or halty temper of mafters, with not allow any defence; filence is then the best expedient for the present, and that, which will foonest moderate the storm. And if the cause be weighty enough to require it, they may afterwards, when they have the encouragement of good humour, either by themselves, or by some other, who has greater liberty of speaking, let their cafe be known. This is much better than an unseasonable defence, which, though just, is not only loft, but very often more provokes, by being ill timed. And here it is, as in most other cases, that our uneasiness and trouble are generally the effect of our own indifferetion.

Q. Is it not a great unhappiness for servants to be thus exposed to all kinds of uneasiness, to

bumours and unjust reproofs?

A. There is no state of life, but what is mixed with variety of trials, and some more severe, than is usually found in service. But in this all degrees are equal; that God has regard to all those, who suffer with patience, and will be a faithful rewarder of

them, and more particularly of fuel, as fuffer wrongfully. In this God has particularly manifested his will to servants requiring them, by the mouth of S. Peten, to be subject with all fear, not only to good and gentle masters, but also to froward; and declaring, that, if they take it patiently, when they do well, and suffer for it, it is an acceptable thing with God, I Pet. 2. 18. This encouragement then they have from heaven, to submit with patience to all the difficulties of their state; and in following such direction, they may find comfort, if they are christians, where all other comforts are wanting.

Q. Is there no other patience necessary for

fervants?

A. Yes, with the labour, attendance, and with all other difficulties of their condition, but especially with their fellow-fervants; so that if any are ill-humoured, peevish, malicious, indiscreet, or otherwise disagreeable, or subject to give ill language, they are to have patience with such; endeavouring to overcome evil with good; and if this has no visible effect on them, they are to have compassion on them, as on unhappy persons, and be so moderate with them, as to avoid quarrels and dissentions and to keep peace. This is the rule of the gospel, and is not to be dispensed with

Whence it is plain, there must be no returning evil for evil, no malicious designs or complaints against one another, no envying or grudging, no backbiting, or provoking, but they are to live in the practice of charity, peace, and love, as becomes brethren.

Besides, they are not to discourage or

diffuade one another from their works.

Not to make parties, and factions in the family against one another; much less against those, who are over them; nor join in murmuring or complaints, so to raise or increase discontents; for this is not only uncharitable, but to be faithless and treacherous: Nor to be out of humour or morose, upon every accident.

Nor to feek or admit too great familiarities, for this is the beginning of many follies and

fins.

Nor to divert themselves with any kind of sinful discourse or songs; for this is calling in the devil to make them merry.

By the observance of these rules, servants may preserve a good conscience, amidst the distinculties of their state; and if they would be so pious as to mix prayers with their labours, and endeavour to offer these to God, in union with the labours of Christ, who took upon him the form of a servant, and came to serve; they may become accept-

able to God, and not only work out their falvation, but even go before those, who in this world have much the advantage of them.



#### CHAP. XI.

Of Labourers, Shop-keepers, and all Traders.

Q. WHAT is the obligation of labourers?

A. That they be faithful in what they have undertaken, and in doing in all

respects, according to agreement.

1

First, That they be faithful, as to the time, spending it wholly in their service, who have hired them; so that whether they have any overseer or no, they are not to idle away the time, nor neglect it, or employ it in any other business. For being hired, the time is not now their own, but his, who is to pay them; and if they defraud him of it, they are unjust.

2. That they be faithful as to their labour and care, so that the work or business, they undertake, be done well; and he, who has hired them, be no loser, through their neglect or carelesness, or want of taking due pains; which in many cases may happen.

3. That they neither keep nor earry away, or apply to their own use, any thing belonging to those, who employ them; for this being not their own, it must be nothing less than fraud, a stealing, and no practice or custom can make it otherwise, if it be done without the consent or permission of the owner.

4. That they demand not more materials, than they fincerely judge the work to require: Nor any other way put those, that employ them, to any unnecessary expense.

Q. What is the obligation of shopkeepers and

other traders?

A. To be just in all they do, so as to deceive or cheat nobody with whom they deal They must be just in setting, as to the

things or goods which they fell:

1. In not putting off damaged or perished goods, for found; nor what is imperfect, for entire; nor distempered, for healthy; nor counterfeit, for true; nor rotten, for strong, &c. For whoever does not observe this, cheats him that buys, and is therefore unjust:

what is altogether useless, for the end for which it is bought; especially when the

whe is declared by him that buys:

103. In not felling goods which are not

4. In not felling stolen goods:

5. In not felling things which are in themselves evil, finful, &c. As may easily be in books, pictures, &c.

They are to be just, as to the Price.

vith regard to circumstances.

2. In not taking any advantage of the

ignorance of the buyer.

found and good, for things that are damaged or counterfeit.

4. In not using deceits for raising the price of goods, or for making them appear

more valuable than they really are.

5. In not monopolizing goods for raising their price, and for oppressing the poor, which is declared an abomination to God.

6. In not using false weights or measures; which is declared to be another like abomi-

nation.

e

d

r

8

r

7. In not using lies or oaths for bringing customers to a reasonable price: And this is much more criminal, if it be, for getting above the value; for then there is injustice and perjury in so doing.

There must be justice likewise in buying:

First, In not buying stolen goods; for this is to buy of those who have no right to fell, as likewise to encourage them in their thest.

rance of the feller, and buying goods, much

under the true and common price.

distress; and offering him only under rates, because he his in want of ready money; or taking goods at less than the value, as a creditor may be tempted to do, for suspending an arrest, with which, for this design he has threatened him.

4. In not using lying pretexts, frauds, or any kind of deceit, for getting goods at less

than their real value.

fhop-book; for this standing good in law, it must be occasion of many unjust payments, if there be not great exactness in cancelling

whatever is paid, &c.

These may serve as general heads for the direction of all such as trade; and must be applyed by every particular profession: For in all these there are so many little artisices and ways of dealing belonging to them, that it is almost impossible even to touch at the variety of frauds to which they are subject; but this must be left to those who are

r

h

8

3,

r

C

r

e

7,

e

r

1,

ıt

e

concerned. Those who dare willing to do well, must remember what St. Paul has declared, That no man over-reach or defraud his brother in any matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all fuch, '1 Thess. iv. 6. and to this tell must bring the method of their profession. For there is so much knavery in most trades, that whoever will take common practife for a good rule, without bringing it to the examen, will be in danger of practifing what is unjust; and if the only plea for this be, for gaining a livelihood, it is what may be taken up by thieves and pick-pockets, &c. And it will be no easy task to prove, why it may not be as good a warrant in one case as the other. ry careral in keeping

WHEN THE THE OF THE PRINCE OF THE PARTIETS.

### n.IIX ea.q.A.H.On cancelling

Obligations of justice in other professions, offices, employments.

Q. WHAT more obligations of justice are there?

M. Every profession, office, and employment, has some; all of them having obligations annexed to them, which are the

E

conditions of the profit, and if not duly performed, are an offence against justice.

The doctor and surgeon, &c. undertake cure; if they neglect their patient; if they will not consider his case; if they make delays in his cure, &c. they are unjust to him, rob him of his money, and many times of his life.

The lawyer is confulted by his client: If he puts him upon unreasonable or unjust disputes; if he encourages or flatters him in vexatious fuits, which have no other defign, but to perplex or ruin his neighbour; if he undertakes to manage any fuch case or others, which he knows to be evidently unjust; if undertaking a just cause, he neglects to enquire into the merits of it, and hazards the lofs of it, for want of taking due pains for manifesting its right; if he contrives ways for putting off the hearing or otherwise prolonging the fuit, either for his own advantage, or for tiring out his adverfary with unreasonable charges; if he puts his client to unnecessary expences; if he concurs or confents to the fallifying of deeds or wills, &c. or in whatever other way, either by a positive concurrence or by a faulty neglect, he does wrong to his client, or to the opponent, he has fo much of injustice to answer for; and if ever he be ferious ferious in repenting, ought to enquire how far it may be necessary for him to make reflitution.

Many undertake to be trustees and guardians: If these have little or no regard to what they have undertaken, fo that the parties concerned are wronged through their want of care and inspection, or for not taking accounts: If they are careful, but manage for their own advantage, and not for those who are in their trust: If they any ways concur in, or confent to any thing in wrong to their trust, however they may palliate it as to fatisfy or elude the law, yet they have fo much injustice to answer to God, and ought to enquire how far they are bound to restitution.

y

30

e,

t,

ıg

ne

or

is

er-

its

he

ds

Y,

nt,

in

be

ous

If those who have the care of the poor, or are concerned in other collections, turn any part of it, above what may be allowed, to their own use: If they make unnecessary expences, and fet it down to the stock: If they any other way concur in, or confent to any thing in their wrong for whom they act: they have so much injustice to answer before God, and ought to enquire how far they are bound to restitution.

If those who are bailiss or stewards, or have any other part in gathering in or paying out of money, through their neglect

VOL. XII.

make those losers who employ them; if they unreasonably oppress debtors, and the poor, for their own gain; if they are industrious in turning to their own advantage, what in right is the masters'; if they make ill contracts, or hazardous for the master, but for their own prosit; if they connive at, or savour those who injure the master; if they any other way, either by neglect or contract, &c. concur in, or consent to any thing in their master's wrong, and for their own gain; they have so much injustice to answer before God, and ought to enquire how far they are bound to restitution.

If those who are in debt are not folicitous to discharge it, and the persons to
whom it is due are sufferers for want of
their money, as it is with most tradingpeople: If persons live at a rate above what
their estate or income will bear, and, for
this reason, are not able to pay off old debts,
but contract new: If ambition, intemperance, vanity, idleness, or any vicious extravagance, be the occasion of running into
debt; as many persons as suffer for want of
their money which is due, so many arguments there are of their injustice who owe
it; and if the many dismal consequences
of such non-payments could be duly laid
before them, I believe they would in many

cases find, that though they at length pay their debts, yet they shall never be able to make restitution for the injuries they have

done by the delay of payments.

n

e

i.

to

of

ig-

nat

for

its,

pe-

nto

t of

gu.

owe

nces

laid

any

If judges, or other inferior magistrates, are not solicitous to do justice, but permit their judgments to be corrupted by passion, favour, party, or interest, they in this do injury to right; and the ill effects may be so great, whether as to estate, reputation, or life, that, however they may be willing, yet it may be never in their power to make refitution for the wrong they have done.

If the persons on a jury have not a due regard to what is just and right, but are biassed by any passion, or party, or interest, and accordingly bring in their verdict; they in this do what is unjust, and instead of rejoicing for that their party or friend has carried the cause, or that their enemy has been worsted, they have reason to grieve all their lives, and may have more restitution upon their hands than it will be ever in their power to make.

If church-men use undue means for gaining of benefices; if by their interest they obtain such a benefice, the obligations of which they are not able to satisfy: If they are not solicitous to inform themselves what are the obligation of their function

Rij

or benefice; if knowing them, they do not zealously labour to satisfy them; if enjoying, without labour, the fruits of a benefice, they consume that which was given for the relief of the poor, and with a scanty allowance keep one to do their work, who, as it may easily prove, may not be qualified for the half part of the function; if they are any other way wanting in the just care which is due to the flock, they may easily incur the guilt of great injustice and facrilege, and may be bound to such restitution as may be never in their power to make.

Thus the obligation of justice belongs to all states; and if Christians are carried away by the violence of passion or interest, and are so bent on gaining their own ends, that they have little regard to what justice demands, they must unavoidably run into great crimes, and be entangled in such variety of debts by the wrong they do, that the truest repentance must be at a loss what to do, to deliver them from the unhappy confequences of their past injustice.

A. The apolitie expredies it in terms above; ifpure; 1 he powers hat bethe ordaines a saw are the condimens

" v. o. The will of Collage mas

which thus lave still upon con councillant



### CHAP. XIII.

sa

e'

ft

y

be

u-

to

to

ay

nd

nat

de-

nto

va-

the

to

on-

# Of Subjects. and the st. sorte.

2 TXTHAT is the obligation of sub-

A. Their name tells them; the obligation of subjects is to be subject: This is a command delivered by St Paul, Rom. xiii. 1. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher

powers." While he enjoins this to every foul, he shews the duty to be universal; and therefore, that none are to think themselves exempted, for that the words of the apostle leave no place for such exemption.

2. Then subjects are to make a con-

science of being thus subject?

A. So the same apostle expressly declares; "Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake," Rom, xiii. 5.

2- What is the ground of this obligation

which thus lays a tie upon conscience?

A. The apostle expresses it in terms above dispute; "The powers that be, are ordained of God, ib. v. 1. They are the ministers of God," v. 6. The will of God thus ma-

R iij

nifested, obliges conscience to approve and obey; and it cannot depart from this, without consusion to itself, because it must always acknowledge this subjection to the ordinance of God, and that in departing from it, it departs from God.

2. Then no resistance is to be allowed?

A. The same apostle answers this; "Who-soever resistes the power, resistes the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation," v. 2.— This determination is plain, positive, and absolute; and therefore is to be a standing and perpetual law to Christians, which they are bound to follow, and by which those, who transgress it, are to be judged: And the judgment is already fixt, "that they who resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

2. But what if those in power be vicious

and finful men?

A. Their fins are from themselves, and they must answer for them; but their power is from God, and that is always good: We must therefore submit to their power, while we disapprove their morals.

2. But what if they command unlawful

things?

A. The scripture, in this case, declares what is to be done; "We ought to obey God, rather than men," Alls v. 29. Su-

preme magistrates have their commission from God, as his ministers; all their authority, therefore, being from God, such commands of theirs cannot have divine authority, which are contrary to the manifest will of God, and therefore ought not to be obeyed.

2. Then conscience is dispensed with in

this general obedience?

ll d

e,

ey

n.

us

nd

er

Ve

ile

ful

res

ey

u-

A. Conscience obeys where God commands; it has his command in both cases, both as to its submitting, and likewise when it ought not to submit. But then this conscience ought to be very well grounded, on a divine authority, and not on the enthusiasms or conceits of private imagination: For it cannot be reasonable, upon such imaginations, though called conscience, to stand against the manifest will of God, and disobey powers, which he has commanded all to obey.

2 But if higher powers join severe penalties with their unlawful commands, and

punish those who disobey?

A. In such case, a person must either peaceably withdraw from such a government, or peaceably suffer the penalty imposed on those who results to submit.

2. May not Christians, in this case, endeavour to vindicate the cause of God, and

vi R De doug, vi e ought to

by fecret contrivance, or open arms, strive to gain liberty for their conscience against

fuch unjust oppression? It is northeatened and

A. They may use all such means as the Gospel allows; which are fasting, prayers and tears, with an humble patience under their affliction: But as for plots, rebellion, or any violence, these are not the arms of the Gospel, and therefore not to be taken up by fuch as profess it. All extremities ought rather to be fuffered, than relief fought by fuch unwarrantable means.

Q. Can you prove this by example and God commisseds lubjects to hone

practice?

A. Modern practice is most on the other fide, but fact is no rule. Example, however, and pradice enough we have from the primitive Christians, to whom all at present appeal; for these patiently suffered, for three hundred years, all the inventions of the most barbarous cruelty, without ever attempting to feek relief, either by plots or violence, against those Heathen emperors, by whose edicts they were subjected to that long persecution. This lefton of suffering with fubmission to civil laws, has been left us by our primitive predecessors; and it being so agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel, it is what we ought to follow; learning from them to glory in tribulation, rather

or the sword. Primitive faith ought not to be separated from this primitive practice.

This is the Gospel-rule for subjects, authorifed by good practice. As to all lawful commands, they ought to be obedient, asowning the power of their rulers to be from God: And for all the penalties for not fubmitting to commands, which a good conscience believes to be unlawful, they are with patience to bear them, waiting for God and his time, when he shall please to send peace. As to all other things, the law of God commands subjects to honour their rulers, to pay tribute to them, and never to revile or speak evil of them. This is the order God has established for the government of the world; and if every one would fatisfy that part in which God has placed them, by being attentive to their own affairs, and leaving the governing part to those to whom it belongs; peace and order would be best preserved, and conscience could not fail of its fatisfaction, either in a comfortable liberty, or a patient fuffering.

its by our brightlye predecedors; and it being to agreeable to the fairly of the Golpel.

1

d

r

-

a t

e e

r

ıt

#### 3. That the love of niches extraguish not 333333 - CCCCCC they have, in tiches; in being tenced by them egainst tunk variety of evils is apt to leffen

### duq man ex CoH A.P. XIV. Anon man

### ni sadi gancar andhus vient fluit aisti, Of the Rich.

### They baye, an obligation to be, watchful 2. WHAT are the obligations of the rich?

A. They are many and great, for having received more than others, they have the greater account; and therefore their obligations must increase, in proportion to what they have received.

They have an obligation to their own fafety, to be watchful against the dangers of the task believes betterning

riches.

1. That they fet not their hearts upon them by love; "For the love of money is the root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 10. And if it be fuch a love as comes to be covetoufness, this draws the heart from God, makes an idol of riches, and hence is declared by the apostle to be idolatry," Cal. iii. 5.

2. That the love of riches destroy not their faith; for that the large enjoyment of things present, naturally draws us from the concern, and even from the faith of in-

visible goods, which are to come.

their hope; for that the variety of helps they have in riches, in being fenced by them against such variety of evils, is apt to lessen their hope in God, and to make them put their trust more in their money, than in God.

They have an obligation to be watchful against many other temptations, which are the consequence of riches; "For they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many soolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," I Timevi. 9.

8

nof

nis

if

s,

n

ot

nt

m

n.

1. That they lose not all charity to the poor; for that feeling no wants, they may hence become insensible of what others suffer; and being so very much taken up in the concern for themselves, may be in danger of not considering the wants of others.

fervice of vanity and ambition, in providing rich cloaths, great retinue, costly furniture, numbers of servants, &c. and these for the magnifying sinful clay.

3. That they turn not their riches to the fervice of gluttony or intemperance, in loading their tables with many changes of costly fuperfluities, or furnishing them and their companions with variety of liquors, till they

R vj

drink away all the comforts of their families, their time, their fenses, estates, their re-

ligion, and their fouls, remedia doug bar

4. That they turn not their riches to maintain an idle life, in the great expence of horses and dogs, and in other sports, games, or entertainments, by which their whole lives are nothing better than a succession or change of idleness.

5. That they prostitute not their riches in the service of vice, nor turn the gifts of God against himself, by letting them be the

maintenance of fin.

These are some of the temptations of riches, some of the foolish and hurtful lusts of which the apostle speaks, which drown men in destruction or perdition. For what other end can those unhappy Christians expect, who being distinguished from infinite others, by plenty of bleffings, distinguish themselves again from others, by being more remarkable finners, and abusing those very bleffings, which God has given them, to his greater offence? Let these but consider the fad fate of the rich man in the Gospel, Luke xvi. 19. Let them confider his character, " Of being cloathed in purple and fine linen, of faring sumptuously every day, and of not regarding the poor at his gate;" and then feeing all this in themselves, betides the great addition of many scandalous and daily fins, let them make up their account, and guess whether they have grounds to hope for a more favourable lot.

2 If the rich then have reason to be careful in these particulars, and these are to be avoided: what is it they are to do?

be avoided; what is it they are to do?

A. They are every day to return thanks to God, for the bleffing of plenty received from him: And every day folicit for his grace, that they may make a right use of what he has given, and be such good and faithful stewards, that they may be able to give an account of the talents received.

2. They are daily to employ their money in such uses, as the necessity, decency,
and comfort of their family may reasonably
require. Nothing is to be wanting through
covetousness or humour to wife, or children,
or servants; but all things are to be provided necessary for their good, with the addition of all others, as discretion, joined in
council with christian temperance, shall
judge convenient in their several and respective circumstances. And if any thing be
wanting to the good christian education or
disposing of children, through any unwillinguess to part with money; this cannot be
excused from being very criminal.

3. They are to be very liberal to the poor,

and ready to put a hand to all kinds of charities, according to their circumstances. This charity in giving alms is a command of God both in the Old Testament and in the New: It is an act of justice, because God so orders it, who is the Lord of all, and upon that title, has a right to command. It is most acceptable to God, and most prevailing for the pardon of sins, (though not of such sins as are not forsaken) and therefore necessary for those who have the guilt of many sins to answer for, and otherwise are not much accustomed to the ways of penance.

4. They are not to put off their charities to their death, for then they give what they cannot keep, and therefore not their own.

from performing charities to the poor, by making unnecessary purchases, and providing immense portions. For this is robbing the poor, by contriving to make their children great, when their greater concern ought to be to make them happy, which might be more reasonably expected from their giving of alms, than by heaping up that for them, which ought to have been given to the poor.

These sew rules may serve, and I wish God would inspire the rich men of our days to practise them. For it is a scandal to the

christian name to see how riches are abused, to see how they are the persons, who, above all, draw judgments upon themselves and the world, who are best furnished above all, for obtaining eternal blessings for themselves, and distributing many blessings to those that want them.

### mammamama

#### ordinate CHAP. XV.

Of the Poor.

2 WHAT are the obligations of the

A. They are to beg every day for the grace of God, to fuffer with patience the difficulties of their flate, and to make a right

use of all they suffer.

2. That they may be encouraged in patience, they are to confider every day the doctrine and example of Jesus Christ, who preserved poverty to riches in the promise (made to the poor in spirit) of his eternal kingdom; who chose to be born and to live in poverty, so as not to have where to lay his head, Matt. viii. 20. Even when he had all the riches in the world at command, as being Lord of all, he chose to be thus poor.

3. They are to confider the danger of

of those that possess them; and then see if a Christian may not find comfort, in being free from the dangers of damnation, as much as men do in being free from tem-

poral dangers. or car should in should be

4. They are to reflect upon the general abuse of riches, and then see, whether there be not reason to rejoice, that they have not wherewith to feed and strengthen their natural corruption; that they have not money to spend upon vanity, gluttony, and intemperance; that they have not money to leave at taverns, play-houses, and at all the shops whose furniture is to inform those, who want nothing, what they want; that they have not money enough to give them opportunity of living an idle life, of letting fleep, dreffing, feasting, gaming, unprofitable visiting, sports, company, park, music, &c. divide their days: That they have not money enough to make them imperious and haughty, nor to oppress or do violence to the poor: That they have not money enough to live a foft, fenfual, and voluptuous life: These and many other fuch abuses they are to confider, and then fee whether it be not the better portion to suffer their wants, than to have a part in the abuses of plenty, or even for us (so weak as we are; and let example

I

I

ŀ

0

frew what our weakness is to be in the dan-

They are not only free from these many temptations, in which fo many fouls perifh, but they have many fair and unavoid able occasions of practifing those virtues, which are most conformable to the Gospel, and most acceptable to heaven; as of patience, under their many wants of those things, which they fee others throw away; " of bumility, under the many affronts, contempts, and oppressions to which they are exposed; and of the contempt of the world, which is fo very uneafy to them. But then it must be their daily endeavour to make use of these daily occasions, by accepting them as the means which God offers them for the faving of their fouls. Hence they are not to yield to any impatience, dejection, or murmuring, under their wants; but carefully fuppress all fuch motions. They are not to express any passion, upon receiving affronts, nor reproach fuch as feem to neglect or flight them; but all is to be received with an humble submission, such as may do good to their fouls, while outwardly they feem to fuffer.

6. They are to receive all the bardships of their state, as the punishment of sin, and as the execution of that sentence, which God pronounced against Adam, and all his

[e

1-

10

to

en

le

posterity. If they could come to the practice of this lesson, they would be envied amidst all their unhappiness; for certainly, so many are the mortifications inseparable from their state, that could they submit to them, as to God's scourge of sin, they might have hence reason to be less apprehensive of the justice to come, and by their patient hu-

mility, would be fitted for faints.

7. They are to have a great confidence in God, amidst their greatest dejection and distress, and not only be mindful of the promises he has made to the poor and afflicted, to the fatherless and widow; but likewise, that he is faithful to his promises, and cannot forfake those who, being proved, are found faithful in their trials. The special patronage then of God ought to be their daily comfort, and likewise his promises of future happiness to those that weep. Their distress is a trial of their hope in God; and therefore being under temptation, they are to be constant, and with their eyes and heart waiting on him, retain still a firm trust in God; confiding, that he will either give them patience, or fend relief.

8. While they trust in God, they are to be industrious in whatever work they can do; because the blessing of God is to be expected upon those that labour, which

the idle and flothful have no reason to hope for. Such, then, as can get their bread by labour, and yet seek to live by alms, are not the poor of the Gospel, but rather robbers of the poor, and abusers of charity. But as for those, who are disabled by sickness, age, &c. they come not into this list; but by a submissive patience, may hope to partake of the protection and blessing promised to the poor.

9. Those who being poor, desire to be reckoned among the poor of the Gospel, ought not to be covetous in their heart or desire. For to have a covetous and worldly spirit joined with a real want, is to have the misery of poverty without the blessing. To desire necessaries and conveniencies, is very lawful, but to be content under want,

is the better spirit.

al

ir

ir

d

rę

rt

in

ve

to ch If those who are poor, carefully decline all unlawful means for a subsistence, and to the best of their industry labour for bread; if they endeavour to practise these rules, and live in a contented submission to the will of God; if notwithstanding all their discouragements of this life, they are careful in their devotions, and omit not their duties to God; if thus they go on, they have reason to be comforted with the prospect of a future life, and wait with the hopes of that hour, which,

though a terror to the rich, will be to them the hour of changing their forrow into joy.

### ide della and take what is judeed proper for

### carette s salt bas alert at med never too

HAT are the obligations of the fick?

A. They are many; some as to the next life, some as to this; but all with relation to

the next, as a preparation for it.

the call or summons of God, who by that calls upon them to turn their thoughts more particularly to the business of a future state; and to make the best preparation they are then able for it, or rather to finish that preparation they have been making all their lives; for so it ought to be.

2. Upon its first approach, they are to make a free offering of themselves to God with all their hearts, committing themselves entirely into his hand, with a free submission to whatever he has ordained for them, whatever the sentence be, whether of life or death. Adding this hearty request, that he

will please to assist them with his grace, that with patience they may suffer whatever he has appointed for them, and be purified by

fuffering, like gold in the furnace.

e

ct

0

as

at

re

e ;

re

e-

eir

to:

ves

on

at-

or he 3. Having made choice of some skilful physician, they are to be governable in their sickness, and take what is judged proper for them; because their life is not their own, but given them in trust, and it is a duty to justice to use all lawful means for its preservation; but they are rather to choose death a thousand times, than seek help by any unlawful means. This being done, or rather before,

4. They are to fend for a spiritual physician, one whose charity will be most helpful to them, in making their peace with God, and give them all necessary assistance throughout their fickness. By his help, they are without delay to feek for mercy by a true repentance, and put their fouls in fuch a state, that if death should be the fpeedy conclusion of their fickness, they should not be found unprepared. It cannot be wisdom to put off and delay this preparation; 1. Because it requires all the forces of the foul, and the best attention of the mind. to do it well; and therefore ought not to be put off, till a person, being disabled, is not master of his own thoughts; and if by good

Adding this hearty request, that he

accident he knows what he does, knows that he is able to do little, and therefore cannot but be perplexed for having delayed that to the last, which ought to have been done in the first place. 2. Because sickness is uncertain, and nobody can be fecure how long he shall keep his senses or life. 3, Be. cause being followed with sleeping medicines, he may never be awake enough to think as that business requires, but may go fleeping out of the world. 4. Because to prepare for dying does not haften death; and to be unwilling or afraid to think of it, is a great temptation and delusion of the devil, and of fatal consequence to yield bim in mind it abere be any dan sti or

5. The next thing never to be delayed, is the fettling temporal affairs, or making a will. This ought to have been done in time of health, and it cannot be wisdom to neglect the doing it; but if omitted, the omission ought to be speedily supplied; because it requires good consideration, and therefore ought not to be put off till such a time, when a person scarce knows what he does; and by a hasty will, or by no will, may leave confusion to his family, and missery to such whom he intended to provide for; which is but an ill preparation for going out of the world.

1

1

•

6. In the time of his fickness, he ought to desire some charitable friend to read in some good book, (as may be proper for his circumstances) and to pray by him every day, morning and evening. For though he be disabled himself, yet he ought not to be deprived of this help, at a time, when he stands most in need of it. Reading being a proper means for settling his thoughts aright, and prayer being the great expedient for obtaining the Divine assistance, in time of his distress: Yet both these ought to be short, or with some interruptions, so not to tire too much his spirits with a long attention.

7. He ought to desire his best friends to put him in mind if there be any danger apprehended of his dying, it being the most friendly part they can do; and nothing being more not only unkind, but unchristian, than to let a man go out of the world, without thinking of it, upon the pretext of not giving him disturbance, as if it were a disturbance at that time to be put in mind of pre-

paring for death.

0

to

it,

he

eld

is

in

to the

be-

and

ch a t he

will,

mi-

vide

go.

8. He ought to call to mind all those perfons with whom he has any difference or dispute, and either to them or their friends, declare his sincere desire of being reconciled; that he heartily forgives all injuries, as likewise that he begs their pardon whom he has injured, and is willing to make whatever fa.

tisfaction is due.

9. If the number and grievousness of his fins tempt him to despair, and persuade him, that it is now too late, he ought to suppress all fuch thoughts, and refolve to do the best and all he is able, in present circumstances; for though the best preparation for a good death, and that, which gives the greatest affurance, is a good life, which is the method of all wife Christians; yet none ought to limit the mercies of God, but endeavour to make the best of his time, which is left; for it is certainly much wifer to do all he can, though with great danger of miscarriage, than to lie down in despair, and be certain-If a finner, terrified by the approach of death, becomes fensible of his unhappy state, and knowing that he has no salvation but in Christ, runs to him with an entire confidence in his passion, protesting that he is truly forry from his heart for all the fins he has committed, and importunes him to become advocate for this unhappy finner; if he does this fincerely and with a true faith, who knows but God may be converted to him, and flew mercy?

10. If he recovers, he ought to beg the continuance of that charity, of some friend

b hi

m

01

m

le

ar

an

ch

to

pr

to read and pray by him twice, at least every day: And when he has strength to fit up or go abroad, he ought to be so mindful of his benefactor, as to consecrate the first-fruits of his recovered health to him by prayer, not by gaming, the play-house, or tavern: And his principal study ought now to be, how he may amend his former life, and be more faithful in the service of God.

As to what has been faid about making a will, this may be remembered, that justice ought to be satisfyed in paying of debts and making restitution where due, before any legacies of charity are made: And that amongst such charities, helping the poor is the most acceptable; poor relations in the sirst place, and then to think of orphans and widows, and distressed housekeepers, and prisoners, &c. Such legacies are more christian, than to add to their heaps, who want nothing, or mispend what they have; or to add to their fortunes, who have enough to be happy, but not enough to be made a prey and become miserable.



they block into the conven

ducht to beg inc

busing agent to

y n re

ns

to

r;

ne er-

he

nd

to



Of Each as Earned Rend Sec.

### annot thev .IIVX . . A A. Dair hearts

ca If

ev

ab

to th

N

W

m

an

aff

ev

fel ed

ne

blo wi

Ca

da

to

pla

Of such as cannot Read, or have not Time to Pray.

ned, with the promile of being

A RE not all christians bound to pray? How then shall they do, who cannot read?

A. They may do very well, if they please, having many ways to pray, though they cannot read.

prayer; for this requires no more, than their

joining in spirit, with those that pray.

2. They may often obtain the charity of fome companion or friend, to read and pray with them. There being few families, in which such a charitable person may not be found.

3. They may pray every day and at all opportunities in their spirit and hearts; raising these to God, and asking all blessings of him. And the prayer of the heart is the best prayer; since the motion of the lips, can never reach heaven, if it be not quickened from the heart.

Q. But if they know not how to raise of employ their heart?

A. Cannot they do like beggars or children? If they know what they want cannot they ask for it of God in their hearts? If the case was but turned from eternal to temporal things, and they had encouragement from some rich person to ask for whatever they wanted, with the promise of being supplyed; would these pretend, they are not able to think of their wants, without a book to help them; or that they could not ask, if they had not their petition written down? No, there would none be found, but who would prefently confider their wants, and make them known. And cannot they do thus with God, who has promifed to hear and to help them? Cannot they examine their many infirmities, and alk for the affiltance of the divine grace to remedy every one in particular? Then; Cannot they confider their fins, and humble themfelves before God, whom they have provoked, and with true repentance resolve upon a new life? Cannot they reflect upon many bleffings, they have received from God, and with all their heart return thanks for them? Cannot they offer themselves to God, and daily defire his protection? Cannot they turn to Christ crucified, see what he suffered, dee the infinite price paid for them, give thanks, place their whole confidence in the merits of

10

n

ed

01

ot

fo

CI

fo

P

gi

or fin

fu

tu

ti

ti

io

u

01

fe

ec

0

ca

m

b

Si

P

his passion, and beseech him to be their advocate to the Father? This and much more may the meanest capacity be able to understand and do.

If they cannot do this at length; yet in short aspirations, they may raise their hearts to God; and, if done from the heart, may be as acceptable to God, as longer prayer; as they may learn from the short prayer of the publican, O God be merciful to me a

finner.

5. They may likewise imitate those begging cripples, who lying in the streets in silence, move passers by to compassion, by laying before them the misery of their disabled, distempered, or lost limbs. For thus might God be moved to mercy, if christians would, in the same manner, lay before him their infirmities, though they should not say one word.

6. If they have opportunity, they may remember, that prayers may be learnt without book, as well as fongs, if they will but use the like industry as some do in the other

case.

7. The meanest capacity may easily learn the Lord's Prayer, and some few others. But suppose they could only say the first, even that may be so managed, that they may at any time employ half an hour, with this

one prayer alone, thus they may repeat it three times in adoration of the Bleffed Trinity: Five times in remembrance and thanksgiving for the facred wounds Christ received on the cross. Five times, to beg God's protection for that day; as many, to ask for mercy and pardon of their fins. As many, in thankfgiving for fuch particular bleffings or prefervations: As many, to ask for grace, for overcoming fuch particular weaknesses or fins, to which they observe themselves most fubject: As many, for obtaining fuch virtues, which they feem most to want, patience, temperance, a clean heart, &c. Many other intentions may be added, as for relations, friends, enemies, for the nation, the king, for all in diffrefs, in fin, in darknefs, in prison, for all Heretics, Jews, Turks, and unbelievers throughout the world. one of these may be added as many Trisagions or glory be to the Father, or some other short fentence, as bleffed be the boly and undivided Trinity, now and for ever Amen: Or, O Jesus, in thee I put my trust, be thou my advocate to the Father, and obtain for me pardon of my fins; or patience or humility or a clean beart, &c. Or, O God, be merciful to me a finner &c. In this manner, may the meanest capacity employ a quarter or half an hour in prayer, whenever they pleafe, without ever Siii

y

er

tn

rs.

ft,

ay

his

being at a loss, what to say. And since Christ himself was pleased, in his greatest distress, to repeat the same prayer or words over three times in the garden of Gethsemani, Mat. xxvi. 44. I think no follower of his needs make a scruple of the repetition here advised. Besides these several ways, something may be learnt from what is to be said to those, that follow.

Q. But what can those do, who have not

time?

A. First, Let them examine, whether this be not a pretext: For many half hours are idly talked away by some, who cannot find time to pray. Let them see likewise, whether with some contrivance they may not get some opportunities. I have seen some make great dispatch of work, when they have leave for sports or visits, after it is done: Why not as much haste, to make place for prayer? May not one quarter of an hour be spared from sleep, either evening or morning?

f

1 1 1

2. If no time can be found, they may have time at least, for sending up their sights, their desires, their repentance to God, in short aspirations, as were now mentioned in the sourch place; for this may be in all kinds of business or work; the heart being at liberty to think, while the hands are employed.

Almighty God, in union with the labours of Christ, while on earth.

Christ, while on earth.

4. They may do all, because it is the will of God, and make their labours a sacrifice of

obedience.

ls i,

is

e-

id

46.

ot

is

re

id:

le-

et

ke

ve

e:

or

be

n-

vè

eir

ort

he

of

ty

5. They may do all, because they are bound to provide for themselves or family, and make their labours a sacrifice of justice.

6. They may do all, and submit to the labours and difficulties of their state, as to the execution of that sentence, which God pronounced against sin, and so make all to

be the punishment of fin.

7. They make practice patience, bumility &c. Under all provocations; whether from masters, companions, &c. They may practice charity, in all the opportunities, that are offered of helping, comforting, encouraging, excusing, forgiving, &c. and especially to such, as are most disagreeable.

8. They may get some time on Sundays; and in the little they can do, remember the

acceptance of the widows mite.

In this manner, whatever they do, may be prayer, and their whole life an exercise of the greatest virtues; and where then can there be reason for complaint, when the most rigorous employment cannot hinder a christian from serving God, if he be but willing and industrious to do what he can?



in his Owner Then Phin

#### O. Can vollivx as A A. H. Dier particu-

#### And the Sinner.

# Q. WHAT are the obligations of the finner?

pl

W

ef

ot

pe

pl

ea

tic

fo

he

po

fo

pr

wl

TI

foo

to

pui

du

fha

A. To be converted to God, and begin a new life.

Q. What is he to do, to become truly

converted to God?

A. He is to ask it of God, and with all earnestness importune him, for his helping grace; for that without this, he cannot hope to effect any thing.

Q. What method can you prescribe him,

to begin and go on with this work?

A. I would advise him to the method prescribed by Christ to Saul, who being stopped in his wicked course was sent to Ananias, to be informed by him of all he was to do; Arise, and go into the city and it shall be told thee, what thou must do, Act. ix. 6. Thus should the sinner do; find out an Ananias, and sincerely desire to be informed by him, of what he is to do. If he subjects himself to the direction of such a person, and every day, if it be possible, gives him an account of his proceeding, it

will be the furest means of success in the accomplishments of his desires.

Q. Can you come to no farther particu-

lars?

1

1

t

A. Yes? I would have him, in the first place, separate from all such company, as are his usual encouragements to sin; for without this, there can be no hopes of effecting any thing. And if there be no other way of doing this; yet, the method people take for health, by change of air and place, cannot fail: Since thus he may easily withdraw from all the usual provocations to evil.

2. He ought to take some time every day

for praying and reading.

3. If he be able, it might be a great help to be liberal, in giving alms to the poor; this being very powerful with God.

for obtaining his grace.

4. To make him serious in what he proposes, he would do well, every day, when he washes his hands, to reslect and say, This flesh must certainly and soon become the food of worms. As likewise, when he comes to the fire, to say, eternal fire is to be the punishment of the wicked: Who can be able to dwell with everlasting slames?

fhall be judged proper, both for overcoming

fuch inclinations, as have been firengthened in him by past fins, and to prevent their drawing him again into the like misfortunes; as also, for making some atonement for the many transgressions, by which he has provoked the wrath of God against him.

having given directions more at large upon this whole matter above, Chap. xxxii, and xxxiii, to which I remit the reader; only adding this one word to fuch as are con-

cerned, that they be mindful,

First, That a true conversion of a sinner to God, is a great work, both for reclaiming the soul from the violence of ill habits, and for obtaining the grace, necessary for

finishing it.

2. That if a finner, proposing repentance, does not resolve in earnest to take pains in this work, and to persevere in it, not withstanding all the difficulties and discouragements he is to meet; his purposes are in vain, and he will for ever have the reproach of his own conscience to be his consusting, who knowing his duty and the will of God, would not take pains to do it.

3. That if he be resolute, in pursuing what he has undertaken, he will find the difficulties lessen upon his hands, and divine

ng

MC

grace to fweeten his labours, fo that what was at first his trouble, will become his comfort, and he will rejoice in whatever he

has fuffered in fo good a cause.

Lastly, That the comforts of a good conscience, and the fair hopes of eternal blifs with God, are encouragements enough for this work. That if a christian compares the unreasonableness, the madness, the brutishness of fin and of those who live in it, with the happiness of a foul living in fubjection to God, and waiting for the change of time into eternity; there need no other motives, for breaking all the flavish chains of vice, and using all necessary endeavours for obtaining the liberty of the children of God.



## XIX A A H S and discour

Of the Pastors of Christ's Church.

e

0

WHAT are the obligations of pa-stors?

A. They are many. First, as to the flock. They are to watch over the flock committed to their charge; and if they defire the character of good pastors, are to give

their life for their sheep, employing it in their service, and laying it down if it be necessary for their good. Such, as give their life for their sheep, must be always solicitous for their good, and must spare no pains, necessary for doing them good.

They must labour in giving them all due instructions necessary for their salvation;

In Preaching.
In Cateching.

In private exhortations, as their particu-

lar circumstances may require.

In preaching, they are not to feek applause or reputation, or any ways to please men; for by so doing, they make void their ministry, and are not the ministers of Christ. They are not to positive the word of God to vile ends; as for managing a party, promoting a faction, encouraging what is sinful, increasing animosities, raising jealousies, undertaking politics, or courting authority for interest or preferment: All this is unworthy of the Gospel, prophane and facrilegious: But the only design ought to be, in considering what may be most proper for the hearers in order to their eternal good.

Catechifing ought not to be omitted, because it is the best means of teaching the slock, and instructing them in all duties; and if this be omitted, by the pastor's fault, I cannot fee, but he must have a part in the guilt of all those, who sin or perish through

ignorance a doud thought in

Private exhortations are necessary, because of the personal exigencies or wants of those in his charge; as for reproving the diforderly, fpurring the flothful, comforting the dejected, affifting the fick, informing the mistaken, perfuading the obstinate, encouraging the good, &c. These are the ne-cessities of his flock, and if he does not attend to them, he is not faithful to his undertaking, and cannnot fail of having many and great fins to answer for, occasioned through his neglect or filence. How many for want of reproving, and repeating reproofs? How many for want of quickening, spurring, remonstrating, &c. Nobody knows, how fins are multiplied, how the flock is injured and God dishonoured, by omissions; and if indifferency, sloth, felf-love or worldly bufiness be the occasion, the case is clear, fuch are not pastors, but hirelings; they love themselves or this world more than their flock; their concern is for the fleece. and not for the sheep.

Besides this care, they are to administer the facraments to the faithful; being always solicitous, that such, as present themselves, be duly prepared, both by the knowledge of their duty, and fincere endeavours for making their peace with God. They are not to admit the unworthy; and if such, as have been notorious offenders, approach, it is but just, they should publicly give proof of their amendment, before they partake of the sacred mysteries: Discipline requires the same method with those, who have openly professed an aversion to one another; and till they are reconciled, they ought not to be admitted to the Holy Table.

All the offices of the facred function ought to be performed with fuch decency, gravity and piety, as becomes the ministers of God, and may be to the edification of the flock. Sancta, fancte: Holy things are

to be performed in a holy manner.

Prayers are to be faid distinctly and devoutly? baste, buddling and chopping of words, are irreverent; betray a want of faith or sense, and are of ill example to those who are witnesses of it.

The places of divine worship ought to be kept decent, as becoming his presence, whose service is there performed; so likewise every thing belonging to the use of the altar and to the worship of God; all ought to be clean; and to permit filth or dirt here discovers a want of respect, and that we have not that concern for God, as for ourselves.

All kind of trading and covetousness ought to be banished from the altar; there is to be no exaction for performing any sacred function; all is to be done with the spirit of Christ and his Apostles. And if the poor are neglected, because they have no offering to make, and cannot contribute to their sub-sistence, who serve the altar, such pastors may have the name, but not the spirit of Christ's Ministers; they serve Mammon more than God.

### ought ale be to co. II . 2 a ton such decency,

Q. If these be the duties of pastors, cer-

tainly they ought to be very holy?

A. They have a great obligation of being fo. When the law was yet imperfect, and the worship of God only in types and shadows, God required of his priests to be holy; the same is much more now required, in the New Law, in which both the worship of God is more holy, and the dignity of the priesthood is much greater. How great this holiness of pastors ought to be, may be understood from the charge they have undertaken, and from the characters or titles given them in the New Testament:

They are called the Ministers of Christ, the dispensers or stewards of the mysteries of God,

I Cor. iv. I.

Ambassadors for Christ, in Christ's stead, 2 Cor. v. 20. As workers together with him, 2 Cor. vi. 1. Kings and priests unto God, Rev. v. 10.

God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to boliness: He therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, 1 Thess. iv. 7.

As my Father bath fent me, even so send I

you, John xx. 21.

He that heareth you, heareth me, Luke x. 16.

Ye are the light of the world, the falt of the

earth, Mat. v. 13, 14.

The consideration of these characters and of the function, shew plainly the dispositions required. The charge God has committed to the pastors or priests, of his church, were it in only teaching the slock, would be enough to inform them of this, since they cannot be good lights, if they are darkness; neither can they teach well, if they be not living sermions, and do not teach by example, more than by word.

The Scripture is very full and positive in pressing this point, but having lately had an occasion of shewing what the Scripture says upon this head, I repeat not the text here; but however, I will conclude with setting down some rules prescribed to pastors or priests of the church by assemblies, synods,

n

and councils of bishops; and by what is enjoined in such cannons, it may easily be understood, what their lives ought to be.

It is not lawful for priests or any of the clergy to keep dogs for hunting or hawks, Conc. Tolet. Can. 10. Whoever of them shall take delight in this game, let them so long cease from their Ecclesiastical Function, Syn. Aug. Can. 2. an. 952. Matisc. 388. Wormat. 868.

It is forbidden all priests to play at dice, and to be present at public shews or balls, Ratisb. 741. Suess. 744. Later. 4. can. 15.

Senon. 528.

The clergy are not in public to play at ball or other games, especially with laymen: They are not to play at dice or other games, which depend on chance, neither let them be encouragers, spectators or witnesses of any others, that play, Senon. can. 25. An. 1528.

We forbid the clergy all kinds of dancing and play, especially at dice—neither do we only forbid them to play, but we will not, that they be spectators of gaming, nor that they permit any to play in their houses. But, if for health sake, they at any time play at ball, or use any other fort of becoming exercise, let them not do this in public, nor play for money, Med. 4 can. de armis.

Load the white relationships track

It is decreed, That no ecclefiastic shall presume to seek to divert himself amidst those worldly vanities, which are usual among the laity, as in hunting, or in vain songs, or in dissolute or immoderate liberties, in music or such like entertainments, Conc. Forojul. c. 6. An. 791.

We forbid the clergy, especially those who have the orders of priesthood, to play at dice or cards, Syn. Lingon. 1404. Senon.

1524.

No ministers of the altar, nor any of the clergy, are to be present at any comedies or

shews, Conc. Load. art. 320. c. 54.

Let the clergy never put on vizors, nor act comedies, dances, or any other entertainments belonging to the stage; neither let them be spectators of them. Let them wholly abstain from dice, cards, and all other forbidden and unbecoming divertisements, both in public and private. Con. Burdig. an. 1583. devit. cler.

We ordain, that prelates be exact and watchful in punishing clerks, especially priests who hunt, Conc. Nannet. an. 1264.

Let not presbyters be present at any banquets that are not sober, neither let them provoke others to drink. We forbid them entrance into all public houses, except necessity obliges them to do it on a journey; Conc. Mediol. 1. Tit. de armis, &c.

Let them never enter into taverns or inns, except forced to it by a long journey; let them never be present at entertainments or at any table where sobriety and moderation are not observed, Conc. Burdig. an. 1583.

Let not the clergy be present at the entertainments of the laity, because it is not becoming and brings them into contempt, Con. Raven. 3. an. 1311. And that their eyes and ears, which are consecrated to sacred mysteries, may not be poluted with the filth of what it is not fit for them to see or hear, Conc. Agath. c. 26.

The Holy Synod has decreed, That for the future no bishop, priest, or monk prefume to hire lands, or undertake any worldly business, Conc. Chalced. Act. xv. c. 3.

Ann. 452.

No man that warreth to God (in undertaking the ministry) entangleth himself with the affairs of this life: Therefore we decree, that no priest undertake secular business; and if he shall do otherwise, let him be degraded. Conc. Mediol. 1. And this is most strictly forbidden by the council, under the penalty of being Anathema, Conc. Narbon. 1551.

Let none of the Clergy walk in fairs or markets, except upon business; if they shall do otherwise, let them be degraded, Conc.

Carthag. 4. c. 48.

These are some canons or rules composed for the clergy, in which it is plain, that as they are taken from out of the people for those things, which belong to God, so their lives ought to be very different from the people, that is, holy in all things; as their function is holy. It is not therefore for them to confider, what is in itself lawful or indifferent, or what the laity may do without fin; they are to confider farther, what is becoming, agreeable or permitted to the fanctity of their character; and examining by this rule, they will find themselves under great restraints, where others plead liberty, and that of all the things that are lawful, all are not expedient. Thus the scripture, thus the primitive fathers declare at large, and thus the bishops of the church, whose proper business it is to inspect and speak in this matter, have in all ages published their fentiments, and not only published, but likewise enforced them by orders, by decrees, by commands and by penalties; by these means endeavouring to make the Clergy fensible of the fanctity of their profession, and how much their lives ought to be above the laity, while they fee fo

many things allowed, and lawful in the laity, under fevere penalties declared unlawful in them:

Not that it can be pretended, that these fanctions of national fynods, and in matters of discipline, are a law to all of this character; It is enough, that they are the fentiments and decrees of so many learned prelates, in fo many feveral nations, and in fo many different ages of the Church, giving their judgments, not in any national concern, nor in a point controverted or disputed, but of the fanctity of the priestly function, and of what things are becoming or not becoming the fanctity of it: This is enough to give authority to their judgments, to gain respect to their decrees, and to make those tremble, who live not according to these rules. authority and respect are much strengthened by the concurring vote of the last general affembly, which not only approves, but ratifies all the decrees, which had been made in these national fynods upon this subject; which being not a part of controversy, and therefore not likely to give offence to any party, I here fet down at length, for their fuller information, who are willing to know their duty and to do it.

S,

d

ds

17-

ty

es fo

#### Conc. Trid. Seff. 22. c. 1.

The Canons of the Life and Good Behaviour of the Clergy are renewed.

n

is

u

cl

g

pi

fo

There is nothing more effectually moves others to piety and to the worship of God. than their life and example, who have undertaken the facred ministry: For fince they are become more remarkable, by being raifed above the things of this world, they have the eyes of all turned upon them, as to a light; and their example is made the meafure for a general imitation. Wherefore it becomes all the Clergy, who are called into the lot of our Lord, so to frame their life and morals, that in their habit, behaviour, manner of walking, discourse and all other things they shew nothing, but what is grave, moderate and religious. And as for leffer failings, which in them would be very great, they are to be careful to be exempt from them. In as much therefore as the good and beauty of the church of God has the greater dependence on these things, so the exactness in observing them ought to be very great: 'The Holy Synod decrees, that whatloever has been formerly and fully ordained by the chief bishops and facred councils, concerning the life of the Clergy, their good behaviour, dress, and learning, as also their avoiding

excess, feasting, dancing, dice, gaming and all forts of crimes, and likewise of not engaging in secular business, the same be for the future observed, under the same penalties, or greater, to be inslicted, at the discretion of the ordinary. Neither let any appeal hinder the putting this in execution, which belongs to the reformation of manners, and if it shall be found, that any of these canons have not been in force, let them be forthwith revived, and due care used, that they be by all rigorously observed, all customs whatever, notwithstanding that so the Prelates may not find God the just avenger of the unreformed lives of those under their charge.

In this manner are the above-mentioned canons revived and confirmed, and for preventing all exception, the very councils are named in the margin, Carthag. Chalced. Aret. Matisc. And Sess. 24. c. 12. the like order is again repeated to the dignished clergy, with these particular injunctions; that they use a decent habit both in and out of the church; that they abstain from unlawful hunting, sowling, dancing, taverns, and gaming, and that their lives be above reproof: Citing again Conc. Turon. and Agath.

t,

m nd

er

ess

t:

rer

ing

ur,

ng

Much more might be here inferted, but this may fuffice: The rule is plain, the reasons are above dispute, and the good effects of it cannot be questioned, that as many, as live by it, will not only be honourable before men, but will be of great authority with the flock, and will have God to be the rewarder. And as for fuch, as observe it not, I think I may politively fay it, they cannot fail of being unhappy: Unhappy in not regarding the fentiments and directions of fo many learned and pious Prelates; unhappy in losing all respect with their flock; unhappy in disabling themselves from doing good to those under their charge, and unhappy in bringing their ministry into contempt. These consequences cannot be doubted by those who seriously consider the great sanctity and duties of this profession; and whoever examines the conditions required by St. Paul, 2 Cor. vi. 3. That the ministry be not blamed or dishonoured, must conclude, That though many reasons are alledged for the contempt of the clergy, there needs no other to be enquired after, besides this one; that the clergy do not live, as becomes their profession: For though there may be many others concurring with this; yet it must be owned, that this alone is enough to bring them into contempt; and, that, were all other reasons removed, their esteem will never be more than common, if they live in common with others.

FINIS

# INDEX.

|                            |             | Page.  |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------|
| A DVICE. To be eafy        |             | 245    |
| A Afflictions              |             | 232    |
| Anger                      |             | 61     |
| Childrens duty to parents  |             | 350    |
| Christian's rule           |             | 3      |
| Clean heart                |             | 263    |
| Cloaths                    | to the be   | 8      |
| Communion                  |             | 219    |
| Company                    | o in action | 42     |
| Confidence in God          | to thouse   | 294    |
| Contentions                |             | 70     |
| Conversation               | 711. 460.0  | 21     |
| Detraction                 |             | 103    |
| -Hearing detraction        |             | 109    |
| Distractions in prayer     |             | 186    |
| Divertisements             |             | 26, 28 |
| Eating and drinking        |             | 14     |
| Forgiving injuries         |             | 81     |
| Fretfulness                |             | 55     |
| Furniture                  |             | 18     |
| God to be served in spirit | and truth   | 300    |
| Vor XII                    | · T         |        |

## INDEX.

| -All to the glory of God THOVE     | bins sa 322 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Habit of swearing, or of taking    | God's       |
| name in vain                       | 130         |
| Humility 1 2 Harry 14 Mary         | 90, 97      |
| Idle life . The state of a snowing | erolubni 30 |
| Ignorant, and fuch as have not t   | ime to      |
| pray                               | estables w  |
| Labourers                          | 379         |
| Lawyers                            | 384         |
| Love of our neighbour              | 75          |
| Love of worldly things             | 251         |
| Love of created things             | 257         |
| Lying                              | 116, 123    |
| Magistrates                        | 383         |
| Married persons                    | 340         |
| Masters and mistresses             | 360         |
| -with regard to fervants           | 364         |
| Melancholy                         | 211         |
| Natural inclinations               | william 5   |
| Observing days                     | 314         |
| Parents                            | 345         |
| Pastors                            | 419         |
| Patience                           | 225         |
| Peace                              | 70, 75      |
| Poor                               | 399         |
| Prayer Community Strong            |             |
| Pride                              | 90, 97      |
| Rash judgment                      | 137         |
| Recreations                        | 26          |
| Repentance                         | 192         |
|                                    | /           |

## P N D E X.

| -The endeavours of true repentar    | ice,     |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| for amendment of life               | 1011198  |
| Rich nisv m                         | 394      |
| Scandal taken at what we fay or do  | 281      |
| Scandalous actions of others not to |          |
| approved for swed to doublette      | 287      |
| Scruples                            | 205      |
| Self-denial                         | 269      |
| Servants                            | 370      |
| Shopkeepers                         | 379      |
| Sick Committee of the same          | 404      |
| Sinner                              | 416      |
| Solicitude in temporal concerns     | 158      |
| State of life how to be chosen      | 330      |
| Subjects                            | 389      |
| Superstitions                       | 307      |
|                                     | 123, 130 |
| Temptations                         | 144, 150 |
| Tepidity                            | 172      |
| Troubles                            | 232      |
| -Best method in time of trouble     | 238      |
| Vanity                              | 90       |
| Virgins                             | 335      |
| Vifits                              | 38       |
| Widows                              | 355      |
| Will, how to be governed            | 49       |
| World                               | 251      |
| -What it fays is not to be regard   | ed 275   |
| Worldly fpirit                      | 164      |

Lateralistic and the section of the process of the The state of the s had an their market by a transfer and their their 21 OC 50 Mound ... PARCIONEL

